Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER

Volume XX, Issue No. 13 | SATURDAY JANUARY 16, 2010 | www.saipantribune.com | 50¢

OPINION METER

This week's poll:

On a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being the lowest and 5 the highest, how would you rate your level of optimism with the second term of the Fitial administration?

Let your voice be heard!
Go to
www.saipantribune.com
to cast your vote.

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Real Change

Tinian Mayor Ramon M. Dela Cruz vowed yesterday to deliver "real change" on the island.

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Dying People

Doctors and search dogs, troops and rescue teams flew to Haiti, a devastated land of dazed, dead and dying people.

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Hasty Pudding

Oscar-nominated actress Anne Hathaway can add another honor to her list: a Hasty Pudding award.

LIFE & STYLE...Page 21

Former estate administrator Pelisamen gets 5 years

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The federal court sentenced former estate administrator Luis Kaipat Pelisamen yesterday to five years in prison for his unlawful use of estate funds.

U.S. District Court for the NMI

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New Zoning administrator RESIGNS

Newly hired Zoning Office administrator Victor Barrett has abruptly resigned, barely seven months after being hired for the position in June 2009.

Fusco

In a statement issued yesterday, the Commonwealth Zoning Board said that board chair Herminia Fusco announced Barrett's resignation at the regular board meeting held

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LABOR PAINS

Hundreds of non-resident workers fall in line outside the building housing the Department of Labor yesterday afternoon to replace the temporary umbrella permits they received last year with permanent ones.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

See story on Page 4.

AG asks for more time in hearing on Cheng's unauthorized release

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The evidentiary hearing scheduled yesterday afternoon on the alleged unauthorized release of a detainee at Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's instruction did not push through after Attorney General Edward T. Buckingham asked for more time.

Buckingham

Buckingham asked the U.S. District Court for the NMI yesterday to reset yesterday's hearing to Feb. 17, 2010, because he needs more time to review its basis. Judge Alex R. Munson approved the request.

Buckingham said the extension would also give the Commonwealth time to file pleadings on behalf of one or more of the individuals who were scheduled to appear at the evidentiary hearing.

Fitial was among the persons reportedly summoned by the U.S. government to appear in court.

Buckingham said he spoke with assistant U.S. attorney Eric O'Malley

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Reactions mixed as blogosphere, news outlets pick apart 'massage' incident

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Sablan

Sablan

News about Gov. Benigno R. Fitial's request for the temporary release of an inmate so she could give him a massage to relieve severe back pain has received mixed reactions, including calls for the governor to resign, be recalled, or be impeached.

Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP), the CNMI's first non-voting delegate to the U.S.

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NMC records 909 students for new spring semester. **PAGE 2**
Local designer gets raves for MMA clothing line. **PAGE 5**

Local

New Tinian mayor vows 'real change'

By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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REPORTER

Tinian Mayor Ramon M. Dela Cruz vowed yesterday to deliver "real change" on the island, providing the steps his administration would take to achieve this, including improving the quality of service provided by each government department.

In his 14-page inaugural address yesterday, Dela Cruz said he will work tirelessly to better the welfare and standard of living of Tinian people throughout his term.

"This is not a pledge. This is my promise," he said, during the ceremony attended by a large crowd of residents, dignitaries and officials led by Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, Delegate Gregorio Kilili C. Sablan (D-MP), and Chief Justice Miguel Demapan, who swore him into office.

Dela Cruz said it is undeniable that Tinian is in a state of despair, but he said bringing this to the public's attention is not to place blame for people's hardship but to acknowledge the challenges that his administration has to face.

'Change is not easy'

He said implementing change is not going to be easy, and requires action that often contradicts the very political system built.

"Change comes at a great cost and sacrifice. In order for us to make real change, we must change the very root of the problem and that is our attitude toward government employment and services," Dela Cruz said, as he urged people to shift away from an attitude of entitlement to an attitude of service and volunteerism.

The new mayor said he turns to the Tinian leadership to join him in leading by example.

He also said that he will turn to the people of Tinian to guide him through his administration, and to help him establish the most effective policies and programs.

His administration's goals include:

■ Improving the quality of services provided by each department by making each department accountable for the services it provides and demand that they practice prudent fiscal management;

■ Promote Tinian's tourism, casino, and agriculture industries as the mayor tries to market and brand Tinian's "Doni Sali" to make the island famous for its hot pepper;

■ Extend call to all ethnic groups on Tinian to join the local government in making the island clean and beautiful by volunteering in the islandwide beautification drive;

■ Strive to create local employment and business opportunities;

■ Support education, youth and cultural programs; and

■ Revitalize Tinian's agriculture industry, especially in light of the military buildup in the region which can be a potentially large market for local produce.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO
Chief Justice Miguel Demapan swears in the newly elected mayor of Tinian, Ramon M. Dela Cruz, yesterday.

Dela Cruz also cited Tinian's casino industry which he said is "the heart of our local economy."

He commended the Tinian Dynasty Hotel and Casino, which has been in operation since 1998, for its determination and persistence despite the struggles. He pledged his full support to Tinian Dynasty and all potential casino investors to make the island's casino industry grow and prosper.

'Challenge yourself'

The new mayor asked the public to challenge themselves.

"Instead of bringing me problems, bring me solutions. Instead of asking me to provide assistance, offer assistance. And instead of placing blame for our current situation, accept it as an opportunity to excel," Dela Cruz said in his prepared address.

Dela Cruz thanked his family, the committee to elect him as mayor, the Republican Party and his running mates, his supporters and the general public for their support to his candidacy, and call on them to continue their support throughout his administration.

"Now is not the time to rest on our victory. Now's the time to prove to ourselves and the people of Tinian that 'yes we can' is not only a political slogan, but a call to all our people and political parties to join our quest to make a change for a better Tinian," he said towards the end of his speech.

TWO DAYS TO ENROLLMENT DEADLINE:

NMC records 909 students for new spring semester

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

With two days remaining before the last day of enrollment, the Northern Marianas College has already posted a significant increase in its enrollment figures, totaling 909 students as of 12:30pm yesterday.

The registration was extended to Tuesday next week to give late registrants the opportunity to come and be counted.

The new spring semester is scheduled to begin on Jan. 19.

Yesterday's figure already exceeded the 2009 spring semester enrollment of 847. This number is expected to still increase due to the registration extension and despite the college having an interim president at the moment.

Dr. Carmen Fernandez was suspended Tuesday by the Board of Regents while under investigation by both the board's fact-finding team and the Attorney General's Office for personnel issues and "other concerns."

Lorraine Cabrera, the college's Adult Basic Education director, was appointed acting NMC president.

Yesterday, she said she's extremely happy with the way the enrollment is going on at the college. "We are extremely pleased with the increase in enrollment from last Spring," said Cabrera.

She attributes the increase to NMC's accreditation reaffirmation, aggressive recruitment activities, the current economic conditions in the CNMI, and other factors.

"I'd like to point out that many faculty, staff, and students are helping to facilitate the registration process. Everyone is working together to ensure a great start to the Spring 2010 semester," she said.

Saipan Tribune was told that those who have not applied for admission may still submit their applications until the last day of registration.

Meantime, NMC emphasized that the Tuesday's enrollment is limited to students who already have an English and Math placement level.

Vacancies now down to 16

Northern Marianas College's Web site has updated its listing of job vacancies, which indicated that of the 27 positions announced last month, the list has narrowed down to 16, with several posts already filled or in the process of being filled.

These vacant positions include the dean for the School of Education; department chair for the Nursing Department; administrative managers for the Business and Nursing departments; and directors for the Office of Admission and Records, School of Education, Student Support Services, and U.S. Apprenticeship Program.

NMC also listed a vacancy for a director for the Library Programs and Services, outreach coordinator for the College Access Challenge Project, and an instructor for Social Sciences.

Meantime, four other program managers are needed by the college and a special assistant to the NMC president.

Woman in SS cards scam gets time-served prison sentence

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

The federal court imposed yesterday a time-served prison sentence on a woman who was arrested for buying U.S. Social Security account cards that were then issued to garment factory workers on Saipan.

Yingzi Xu, 26, a Chinese national, has been detained for a total of 118 days already. This means she would no longer serve further jail time.

However, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Alex R. Munson placed Xu on two years of supervised release.

Munson ordered her to be delivered to the U.S. Immigration for deportation.

The judge also required Xu to immediately pay a $100 court assessment fee.

Munson said the sentence is appropriate as the defendant has no criminal history, has accepted her conduct, and immediately cooperated with the authorities in the investigation.

"The court is aware that the defendant desires to go home to China," Munson said.

Before the judge announced the sentence, Xu cried as she, through an interpreter, apologized to the court for what she had done. Xu said she was not aware that she was violating the law when she bought the SS cards. Xu said if she had known, she would not have done it and that her parents would not have given her the money to buy the SS cards.

"I am very sorry and remorseful, I ask you will help me go back to China as soon as possible," she said.

Responding to Munson's inquiry, Xu said her parents are currently in Korea where her father is working as a construction worker while her mother is a kitchen helper.

Xu claimed that she borrowed $21,450 from her parents to buy the SS cards.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Kirk Schuler recommended a one- year probation sentence. He said the defendant has been detained for approximately four months. Schuler said Xu pleaded guilty and cooperated with the investigation.

Steven Pixley, counsel for Xu, agreed with Schuler's recommendation.

Pixley said Xu was released to a third party custodian after spending a total of 118 days in jail. He said the defendant just borrowed the money from her parents to purchase the SS cards.

In the defendant's memorandum, Pixley said Xu paid the sum of $21,450 to a government informant in return for the SS cards.

"These funds were then turned over to the government and no loss was sustained by any party," Pixley said.

Pixley said Xu provided information regarding this criminal offense to the U.S. government and cooperated with its investigation relating to these SS cards.

Xu pleaded guilty to one count of buying a SS card and possessing an SS card with the intent to sell the card. The two other charges were dismissed.

Under the plea bargain, Xu agreed to forfeit any rights to whatever interest she has to the $21,450 that she used to purchase the 165 SS cards.

According to the plea agreement, on Feb. 16, 2009, the defendant bought 165 SS cards for $21,450 from a person in the CNMI.

Xu possessed the 165 SS cards along with two other SS cards that she brought with her from China. The intention was to sell all the 167 SS cards.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation determined that the purpose of buying the SS cards was to establish identities for illegal immigrants in the U.S. mainland.

The FBI arrested Xu on Aug. 3, 2009, on Saipan.

The FBI also arrested Xu's boyfriend, Yongri Piao, on the same day Xu was arrested. But the court later dismissed the complaint filed against Piao based on the prosecution's recommendation.

REV&TAX REMINDERS

FOR EMPLOYERS

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to inform all CNMI employers that the distribution of the 2009 W-2CM Forms and Instruction will begin on Wednesday. Jan. 20, 2010, from 8am to 4pm, at the office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation located at the Dandan Commercial Center. All business and employers are asked to pick up the forms during the regular business hours beginning Jan. 20, 2010. Please be reminded that the deadline for filing 2009 W-2CM form is Monday, March 1, 2010 at 4:30pm. ***(PR)***

FOR CNMI RESIDENTS

The Division of Revenue and Taxation wishes to remind all CNMI residents that the 2009 4th Quarter deadline for filing the quarterly tax returns is Monday, Feb. 1, 2010. The Division of Revenue and Taxation will be open from 7:30am to 4:30pm on Monday, Feb. 1, 2010. The office of the Division of Revenue and Taxation is located at the Joeten Dandan Commercial Center. For additional information, call 664-1000, 664-1043 Compliance Branch, or 664-1065 Collection Branch. ***(PR)***

AS PART OF ITS HIRING REQUIREMENTS

BOE eyeing inclusion of criminal history records

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The Board of Education wants to strengthen the existing personnel regulations of the Public School System to ensure the protection of all students enrolled in its 20 public schools on three islands.

Board member Herman T. Guerrero has proposed the inclusion of criminal history records as among the major requirements for all system personnel. This, he said, is meant to protect children while they are in the custody of the system.

Guerrero, during the board's regular meeting on Thursday, pointed out that the existing regulation of requiring only the police clearance of employees or applicants is not enough proof that children are being handled safely by PSS.

"I think we should require the criminal history record [of personnel] besides the police clearance. …This way, we can protect our kids [from potential harm and abuses]," he told the board.

Guerrero said his proposal stems from his clarification with authorities that the police clearance and criminal history record are two entirely separate documents.

Since PSS hires many applicants from off-island, Guerrero believes that requiring them to hand in their criminal record to PSS would help the students in the long term. Locally issued police clearances do not include off-island criminal history.

Guerrero said that due to this lack of information about the criminal records of its personnel, PSS fails to provide "assistance" to other agencies that usually inquire about the criminal background of people.

PSS is home to over 11,000 students and about a thousand of employees, most of whom are classroom teachers.

The Board of Education adopted last year a pay differential for hard-to-fill positions as an incentive to attract qualified candidates, majority of whom are from off-island.

Last month, PSS admitted that there were still many positions up for grabs. Of the 108 positions to be funded by the stimulus money, only 55 have been filled.

LONG LINES—AGAIN HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Hundreds of foreign workers line up at the Department of Labor in San Antonio yesterday to obtain a permanent umbrella permits to replace the temporary permits given them last year. The new process was intended to prevent the revocation of the foreign workers' umbrella permits.

CPA comptroller retires after 17 years of service

Immediate hiring for 4 key positions eyed

By MONETH G. DEPOSA
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REPORTER

The comptroller of the autonomous Commonwealth Ports Authority is set to retire after 17 years of service, resulting in four vacant positions at the management level.

Frances Mafnas confirmed yesterday her retirement effective Feb. 13. She was appointed as permanent comptroller late last year upon the resignation of David Blake in July.

CPA earlier said a permanent comptroller at the agency is necessary for its bond indenture agreements for both airport and seaports. An unstable financial staffing at CPA could affect the status of these agreements.

CPA had difficulty hiring qualified candidates for the position since the resignation of George Palican in 2007. It finally named Blake, a certified public accountant, to the post in February 2008 for a one-year contract worth $65,000.

CPA was placed under a state of emergency last year and came under the control of the Executive Branch due to bond indenture problems.

One of the main reasons cited for the relatively high turnover rate of key management personnel at the agency is the "unattractive" salary it offers.

CPA provides only up to a maximum compensation of $70,000 per annum. This is already $20,000 beyond the salary cap set by law.

CPA executive director Edward Deleon Guerrero acknowledged yesterday the need to immediately hire a comptroller and three other positions so as not to hamper the agency's operation and performance this fiscal year. He said the management will ask the board for the immediate announcement of these vacancies.

Saipan Tribune learned that CPA has also been operating without a deputy comptroller, a staff engineer, and assistant ports police chief, as well as two flight service attendants on Rota.

Deleon Guerrero said these vital posts need to be filled at once to ensure the smooth operation of the agency. "These positions are critical to the service of CPA and we would ask the board to approve an immediate announcement, particularly for the comptroller position," he said.

The agency has also some vacancies in other areas of operation. All these critical posts are budgeted and are considered replacement positions, Deleon Guerrero said.

At present, CPA has 180 employees at its three airports and seaports.

EMO issues high surf, small craft advisories

A large north to northwest swell will produce hazardous surf and dangerous rip currents on north facing reefs today, Jan. 16, 2010, according to the CNMI Emergency Management Office. A high surf advisory is now in effect until 6pm today. A small craft advisory issued Tuesday also remains in effect.

EMO is strongly advising the public to avoid venturing near exposed reefs and beaches, especially those along north facing reefs as rip currents are life threatening.

Inexperienced mariners, especially those operating smaller vessels, should avoid navigating in these conditions. If boating is necessary, exercise caution when entering and leaving harbors, inlets and near reef lines.

Hazardous surf of 7 to 9 feet will affect north facing reefs and beaches today, producing dangerous rip currents. Surf should subside below hazardous levels by Saturday evening.

Seas 10 feet or greater and sustained winds of 22 knots or higher are expected to produce conditions hazardous to small craft.

Today, northeast wind will be 20 knots, with wind waves of 4 to 6 feet. There will also be mixed swell, with east at 8 ft and northwest at 6 ft.

Tonight, northeast wind is expected at 20 to 25 knots, with wind waves of 4 to 6 ft. Mixed swell east is projected at 8 ft and north, 5 ft.

On Sunday and Monday, northeast wind is projected at 20 to 25 knots, wind waves at 5 to 7 ft., east swell of 7 to 8 ft, and north 5 to 6 ft. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

JEWELRY AUCTION
Seized Assets from Police Departments, IRS, U.S. Treasury & Narcotic Dealers
And others in violation of laws. Items bought from seized assets auctions will go up for bid with other merchandise which includes the majority of items.
HIGHLIGHTS INCLUDE:
Certified solitaire diamonds from 1 to 7 carats. Many diamond stud earrings. A huge selection of TANZANITE jewelry from 1- to 13 carats. Rolex watches. Large selection of topaz, aquamarine, tourmaline & opal jewelry. 51 carat diamond & ruby necklace. Swiss made gold watches. ESTATE jewelry, Bracelets, bandfles, earrings, necklaces, rings, etc...
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TOTAL VALUE: $2 Million
Roberto Galleries ~ State of Washington Auctioneer License #2506
Sunday, January 31st
Auction: 12 Noon • Preview: 11am

Commonwealth Cancer Association
AWARENESS•EDUCATION•HOPE

Public Notice

Hereby giving notice that the Commonwealth Cancer Association (CCA) will hold their Annual meeting on Wednesday, January 27, 2010 at 6:00 p.m. at the Commonwealth Health Center, Secretary's Conference Room 3, Saipan

I. **Attendance**
- Roll call
- Approval of Agenda
- Review and Approval of Minutes

II. **Program Director's Report**

III. **New Business**
- Election of New Officers

IV. **Miscellaneous**

V. **Adjournment**

/s/ Alexander A. Sablan
President

P.O. Box 7997 SVRB, Saipan, MP 96950
Telephone: (670) 236-8728/682-0050 Fax: (670) 236-8728
www.ccamarianas.org

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Saipan, Mp 96950
Telephone No. 868-8782

PRO SE

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

IN RE THE MATTER OF THE APPOINTMENT OF ALFREDO G. NAPO AS GUARDIAN OF THE ESTATE OF MARIFRED LIFOIFOI NAPO:	FCD GU CIVIL ACTION NO. 10-0009
Minor Child, By: ALFREDO G. NAPO, Petitioner.	NOTICE OF HEARING

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that a Petition for Appointment of Guardian for the estate of the above-named minor child by Alfredo G. Napo, Petitioner, was filed with the above-entitled Honorable Court.

A HEARING of said petition for Guardianship will held at the above-entitled Honorable Court at Superior Court before the Honorable Kenneth L. Govendo on the 1st day of February, 2010 at 9:00 A.M. or as soon as thereafter.

DATED THIS 11th day of January 2010.

/s/ **Bernadia A. Sablan**
Clerk of Court

Atty. Rober Myers (F0365)
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Counsel for Plaintiff
NINO LUIS B. CAMACHO, JR.

IN THE SUPERIOR COURT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS

NINO LUIS B. CAMACHO, JR. Plaintiff, vs. LUIS I. CAMACHO, Defendant.	CASE NO. 07-0460 FCD-PA NOTICE OF MOTION

DATE: February 4, 2010
Time: 1:30 P.M.
Judge: Hon. Kenneth L. Govendo

NOTICE is now given that Plaintiff, Nino Luis B. Camacho, Jr., (the "Plaintiff") will move through the undersigned counsel for an order allowing substitute service on the defendant, Luis I. Camacho, (the "Defendant") on 4th day of February, 2010 at 1:30 PM in the Commonwealth Superior Court in Guma Hustisia, Susupe, Saipan, MP. This motion is under Com. R. Civ. P.4.

Dated: **December 30, 2009.**

/s/ **Atty. Rober Myers, Jr.**
The Law Office of RH Myers Jr
Counsel for Plaintiff
NINO LUIS B. CAMACHO, JR.

Workers' agony on umbrella permits not over yet

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The curse of long lines that plague the Department of Labor's issuance of umbrella permits is not over yet for the islands' foreign workers.

Starting at 7am yesterday, alien workers who were previously given temporary "umbrella permits" began forming a line at Labor to get their permanent permits. The numbers swelled as they day wore on, the workers' misery unrelieved by the scorching heat of the sun and the lack of available shade.

Most of the female workers had umbrellas with them to protect them from the scorching heat. Around 1pm, many workers got wet due to a brief drizzle.

As of 4:30pm, over a hundred alien workers were still lined up outside and inside the Afetna Square Building where Labor is located.

It was not clear whether Labor closed at 5pm yesterday. The department informed the workers, though, that the process will continue on Tuesday. Monday is Martin Luther King Jr. Day, a Commonwealth holiday.

Beth, a store cashier, told *Saipan Tribune* that she was among those who joined the line as early as 7am. She said that after an hour, a Labor official began calling in the workers in alphabetical order. As a result, Beth said, they lost their place in the line. She said she was so disappointed that she went home instead.

"Labor should think that we have work too. They should develop an orderly system to avoid these long lines under the sun," she said.

Labor Deputy Secretary Cinta Kaipat told *Saipan Tribune* that they are doing their best to accommodate everybody.

"There's a lot of people. People have to understand that we are doing the best we can," Kaipat said.

She said these workers were given a report-back date of Jan. 15, 2010.

"They have umbrella permits and we asked them to come back so we can issue them the permanent permit with their photographs on it," she said.

Kaipat asked the workers not to panic.

"We will continue to do this until we're done. Next week we will continue this. We will entertain everyone," Kaipat said.

As there was still a long line late yesterday afternoon, Kaipat said they sent some staff down to talk to the people and give them report-back dates next week.

"So that gives them a choice either wait or if they want to come back next week, they can do that," she added.

Kaipat earlier stated that more than 96 percent of eligible foreign workers were able to pick up their "umbrella permits."

Long lines were also a main feature when Labor issued "umbrella permits" from Oct. 26 to Nov. 27, 2009.

REACTIONS

From Page 1

House of Representatives, said yesterday that he "feels bad" that the governor got sick but expressed hope the incident is an "isolated" one.

"I would like to think this is an isolated incident. What happened has happened," Sablan told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday.

Sablan will go back to Washington, D.C. next week.

When asked how we would respond to members of the U.S. Congress and others in Washington, D.C. about the release of a detainee to provide massage service to the CNMI governor, he said: "I think it's not right but I'd also say it's an isolated incident and should not happen again."

National media such as *The Washington Post*, the *Los Angeles Times*, and Associated Press have carried the story, while letters to the editor and blogs are teeming with reaction to the incident.

The governor had asked for the temporary release of Qing Mei Cheng from the CNMI Department of Corrections facility on Jan. 8, 2010—two days before his inauguration for a second term and without federal authorization—and had her brought to his house to massage his back to relieve lingering pain. Qing was returned to jail shortly after.

Qing was among 22 Chinese nationals arrested last week by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents for allegedly trying to illegally enter Guam on a boat. The 28-year-old Qing and Jian Li, 31, male, were indicted on 22 counts of attempting to bring aliens to the U.S.

Former Rep. Tina Sablan said yesterday that "no matter how we look at it, Fitial has just committed a major and outrageous abuse of power, and he must answer not only to the federal government but to all the people of the CNMI for his actions."

"That he would simply order the unauthorized release of a detainee using his position and authority as governor is bad enough, but this happened to be a federal detainee who was just recently indicted on human trafficking charges, who was being held without bail because she was determined to be a flight risk. Moreover, the reasons that he has given us for this unauthorized release are just ludicrous," she told *Saipan Tribune.*

The former lawmaker said Fitial's actions "were absolutely wrong no matter how he tries to justify or explain them, and he is absolutely responsible for the choices he has made. There are no good excuses, and no easy scapegoats. The buck stops with him."

Rep. Ramon "Ray" Tebuteb (R-Saipan) said this is an important matter that is impossible to ignore, especially because of its possible implications on the CNMI-federal relations, as well as the governor's involvement.

He said he will bring up the issue with his colleagues in the House minority bloc next week.

The House of Representatives is dominated by Fitial's Covenant Party and independents who have aligned with the party. The Republicans—nine of them—are now the minority in the 20-member House.

Public participation

Tina Sablan, who successfully sued Fitial for the non-release of financial documents related to the CNMI government's lawsuit against federalization, said there are many ways that people can express their outrage and call for Fitial to be held accountable for his actions. She said the comments on blogs have been a good start.

"People can also cooperate with federal investigators and submit any information they have that would shed greater light on Fitial's actions, or on the human trafficking cases that have surfaced. In addition, they may write letters to the editor and to the Legislature, and call upon the Legislature to open an investigation and determine whether or not Fitial's actions rise to the level of impeachment and removal," she said.

Sablan, who authored the popular initiative that re-applied the Open Government Act to the Legislature last year, said people can also "directly call on Fitial to resign from office, or effectuate a recall petition and force his removal."

"Under our Constitution, a recall petition can be filed after Fitial has served at least six months in his term, and would require the signatures of at least 40 percent of qualified voters in the CNMI. Between now and six months from now, people can be gathering signatures for the petition," she said.

Sablan, who served only one term in office as House member before losing in a senatorial race, said in her view, "Fitial's actions would more than justify his impeachment, recall, or resignation."

"How seriously the people of the CNMI take this latest abuse of power, and how brave and willing we are to actually take a stand against it remain to be seen. I am more than willing to talk to anyone who shares my concerns and who would like to take further action. I can be reached at 285-3935 or tinasablan@gmail.com," she added.

On Thursday, the Fitial administration issued a statement admitting that the governor asked CNMI Corrections Commissioner Dolores M. Aldan last week to temporarily release Qing from jail because he needed her services due to "severe" back pain.

Fitial, 64, said Qing is one of his best massage therapists.

He said he didn't know that Qing was in prison when he tried to reach her on the night of Jan. 7 when he began feeling severe back pain, until the early morning hours of Jan. 8.

Aldan took responsibility for the release of the defendant.

Fitial and Aldan, in a media statement, said they have each prepared a sworn statement "to clarify lingering questions surrounding the facilitated and secured transportation" of a federal detainee from the Department of Corrections facility in Susupe to the governor's residence in Gualo Rai on Jan. 8 and back to the Corrections facility.

Fitial said he hopes his statement and that of the DOC commissioner will help paint a clearer picture of the events that took place.

"I made this request because this was an unusual situation where I needed to address the extraordinary pain I was experiencing and also wanted to follow proper procedures before a detainee is released from custody, even if only temporarily," the governor said, adding that his wife, first lady Josie Fitial, and corrections officers, were present while the massage was ongoing.

AG ASKS

From Page 1

Thursday afternoon about the Commonwealth's request for postponement. He said O'Malley advised him that he would not oppose this.

On Thursday, Munson granted the U.S. government's motion to conduct a hearing on the alleged unauthorized release of Qing Mei Cheng from the Department of Corrections.

Qing was one of 22 Chinese nationals recently arrested by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement agents for allegedly trying to enter Guam illegally. The 28-year-old Qing and Jian Li, 31, male, were indicted on 22 counts of attempting to bring aliens to the U.S.

According to O'Malley, Corrections officials removed Qing from the Department of Corrections on Jan. 8 without federal authorization and brought her to Fitial's house where she provided massage treatment for the governor.

Prior to her arrest, Qing was Fitial's regular massage therapist.

O'Malley said that, early in the morning of Jan. 8, 2010 the governor instructed DOC Commissioner Dolores M. Aldan to deliver Qing to his private residence for the purpose of providing him treatment.

The prosecutor said that prior to this, Aldan repeatedly tried to contact Buckingham and the U.S. Marshals Service, but was unsuccessful.

Despite the failure to obtain prior federal authorization and having received Fitial's approval, DOC Capt. Arnold K. Seman, Capt. Georgia Cabrera, Corrections Officer Abigail Borja, and Aldan escorted Qing to Fitial's residence in the early morning hours of Jan. 8.

Qing was promptly returned to the DOC after providing treatment to the governor.

Fitial admitted asking Aldan to temporarily release Qing—whom he described as one of his best massage therapists—because he needed her services due to severe back pain.

PELISAMEN

From Page 1

Chief Judge Alex R. Munson sentenced Pelisamen to 60 months in prison and ordered him to pay $625,775 in restitution to the Rita Kaipat estate.

Upon release from jail, Pelisamen will be placed on three years of probation.

The judge also ordered the defendant to immediately pay $500 in court assessment fee.

Munson noted that Pelisamen has not accepted responsibility for committing the crime.

He added, though, said he did not adopt the jail term range in the sentencing guidelines because of Pelisamen's medical circumstances.

The judge remanded Pelisamen into the custody of the U.S. Marshals Service after learning from the U.S. Probation Office that Pelisamen had stated that he would kill himself when taken to jail.

"I want him on a suicide watch," Munson said.

Munson ordered the U.S. Marshals Service to make available to Pelisamen any medication that he is currently taking.

Munson also instructed the U.S. Marshals Service to bring Pelisamen to Guam on or before his scheduled medical referral for his scheduled lower back surgery on Feb. 2, 2010.

Before the judge handed down the sentence, Pelisamen told the court that he had already gone through kidney and gall bladder operations. He said he has diabetes, heart ailment and suffers from back pain.

"I have a lot of pain at this time," he said.

"I apologize for that I've done because I thought it was right. I just followed my lawyer on what to do," said Pelisamen, referring to his then counsel and co-defendant Joseph Aldan Arriola.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Kirk Schuler recommended 108 months' jail term. Douglas Cushnie, counsel for Pelisamen, recommended a lenient sentence, asking the court to consider his client's medical situation.

"He is taking a dozen different medicines," Cushnie said.

Pelisamen used to be the administrator of the estate of Rita Kaipat. The estate received $1.37 million in distribution.

The U.S. government charged Pelisamen with the unlawful use of estate funds. On June 22, 2009, a federal jury found Pelisamen guilty of conspiracy to commit wire fraud, wire fraud, conspiracy to commit money laundering, and two counts of money laundering.

Pelisamen asked for a new trial. Munson denied it.

ZONING

From Page 1

on Jan. 14, 2010.

She said that Barrett resigned on Jan. 6, 2010, due to unanticipated personal issues. The Zoning board statement did not elaborate.

Barrett began working for the Zoning Office on June 22, 2009.

Zoning planner Theresa Ogumoro was named acting Zoning administrator and will continue in that capacity until the position is filled.

The board has agreed to start the process to fill the position as soon as possible.

"Mr. Barrett had accomplished a lot in the short time he served as Zoning administrator," said Fusco.

She credited him for successfully reducing the backlog of pending permit applications and in streamlining the application process. Barrett also led the preparation of the Beach Road Corridor Improvement Project proposal. The board later learned that the proposal was not approved for funding under the energy grant.

"Mr. Barrett has also made notable contributions to the character of the island through implementation and administration of the zoning law," Fusco said.

She said that some of the immediate important zoning issues that the Zoning Office will be addressing are the updating and revision of the 2008 Saipan Zoning Law, the adult business park, the problem of dilapidated buildings, and the removal of junk cars.

"It has been almost two years since the implementation of the Saipan Zoning Law and substantial improvements have been made in some parts of the island, but much still has to be done. With tourism being the CNMI's main industry, it is critical that proper planning and zoning is in place to ensure that we achieve the goal of being a world-class tourist destination. The board and zoning office staff are working hard to achieve that goal with the cooperation and collaboration of other government agencies," Fusco said. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Local designer gets raves for MMA clothing line

The once thriving Saipan garment industry received more than its fair share of international headlines over the past two decades, but an up and coming local designer is bringing positive press to the Marianas though his successful marketing efforts abroad.

Filipino-born Norman Del Rosario has called Commonwealth home for the past 10 years, and recently received recognition from online sports magazine *bleacherreport.com* for giving birth to one of the hottest new clothing lines for mixed martial arts fighters.

Bleacher Report features writers from all over the world who cover professional and collegiate sports. Senior analyst Nick Colon's recent story, *Top Five MMA Clothing Brands You Don't Know but Should,* featured designers Scrappler, Boston Brawler, Crooked Jaw, Insanity Fightwear and Del Rosario's locally produced Konflikt MMA.

In his recent post, Massachusetts-based Colon wrote that Del Rosario's up and coming brand is one that MMA fans should be on the lookout for in the future.

After putting his creative talents to work for companies, clubs and organizations throughout the Marianas, Del Rosario decided capitalize on his creativity and launched Konflikt MMA in 2008. Since then, Del Rosario has developed his brand into one of the most sought after clothing lines in the regional MMA industry.

Fighters, fight fans and MMA enthusiasts agree that Del Rosario's designs pack a creative punch akin to those thrown by the fighters he represents. What makes Del Rosario's success unique is that he has gained a foothold far beyond Saipan's shores.

While many designers get lost in the sea of competition, Del Rosario is designing gear for professional fighters Mark Munoz, Junie Browning and Philippe Nover. Konflikt will continue to ride the wave of success when Del Rosario's designs break into the Ultimate Fighting Championship scene in UFC 109 on Feb. 6, 2010.

Focusing on the niche market has been the key to Konflikt's success inside the cage, Del Rosario's vision has expanded to include a variety of fight shorts, gloves and other accessories in the near future. The King of Konflikt recently launched a line of ladies apparel, and new designs are constantly being added to enhance the brand.

While Del Rosario's designs are sought after by fighters and fight fans around the world, the full line of Konflikt MMA Clothing is available exclusively at the 670 Rock Steady Shop in Gualo Rai, Saipan. ***(PR)***

Immanuel United Methodist Church angels will dance again to re-celebrate Jesus' birth. They are shown here with lay pastor Millie Carroll after dancing in the 2005 Christmas Service.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Saipan's Immanuel United Methodist Church to 're-celebrate' Jesus' birth

The Immanuel United Methodist Church will re-celebrate the magnificence of Jesus' birth on three Sundays: Jan. 24, Jan. 31, and Feb. 7.

Returning Jan. 24 to IUMC as its Lay Pastor, Millie Carroll said, "Some might feel this is a little strange. But since Jesus' birth followed hundreds of years of waiting, expecting, hoping, it seems the perfect way to begin our time together by celebrating Jesus' birth and simultaneously begin trying to 'Build the Church We've Always Hoped For.' Perhaps it will be even easier to focus on the true meaning when the commercial side of Christmas has passed. That is the hope for our first three multi-age services together!"

IUMC invites readers to join them on Jan. 24 to relight both the Christ candle and the candle of joy, and to focus on the shepherds. "We hope it will be especially meaningful for children as they travel with shepherd boy, Ahab, to Bethlehem to present his gift to Jesus. You might even get to be Ahab!" said Carroll.

The Jan. 31 service will focus on the wise men and gifts they brought to Jesus. "Our gifts will include notes or pictures, if we're young or feel we're not good writers, notes on what we want to forgive and also ones for which we want to be forgiven. Our gifts to Jesus, and also a way to start the New Year.

"Our third, Feb. 7, will focus on the angels that spoke to Mary and the shepherds. And our angels will dance again! Some of them are pictured here after dancing in IUMC's 2005 Christmas Service."

IUMC welcomes all to the multi-age Christmas Services beginning Jan. 24, at 9am.

Immanuel United Methodist Church in Chalan Konoa is on Chalan Konoa Street and Barbara Avenue (east of Town Center and Beach Road, near the Mount Carmel Cathedral. For more information, call 322-6158 after Jan. 21. ***(PR)***

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Sunday events caps CK Diocese's Jubilee celebrations

This celebration of the 25th anniversary of the Episcopal Ordination of Bishop Tomas A. Camacho and the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa will culminate in a series of activities on Sunday, Jan. 17, 2010.

The activities are:

- 2pm, Novena to the Holy Spirit, Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa
- 3pm, Diocesan-wide Thanksgiving Mass, Mount Carmel Cathedral in Chalan Kanoa
- 6pm - 10pm: Fundraiser Banquet at the garden of the Hyatt Regency Saipan in Garapan ($50 per person)

SVES Canaries host walkathon-for-a-cause today

The San Vicente Elementary School will be hosting today, Jan. 16, 2010, its Annual Canary Walk-a-thon that is intended to raise funds to benefit the school.

The walkathon will be held at the San Vicente Softball Field today from 7am to 12pm.

Walkathon organizers said that the money that will be raised from this activity will be used for, among other things, the purchase of new playground equipment. It will also to promote health and wellness not only among the students and parents but also within the community.

There will be a free t-shirt for $15 pledge and prize for the most laps and highest pledges collected.Raffle prizes, community booths, games and activities will also be available. ***(PR)***

Beautify CNMI sets first meeting of 2010

Beautify CNMI!'s 2010 kickoff meeting is scheduled Friday, Jan. 22, 2010, 3pm, at the DEQ Conference Room.

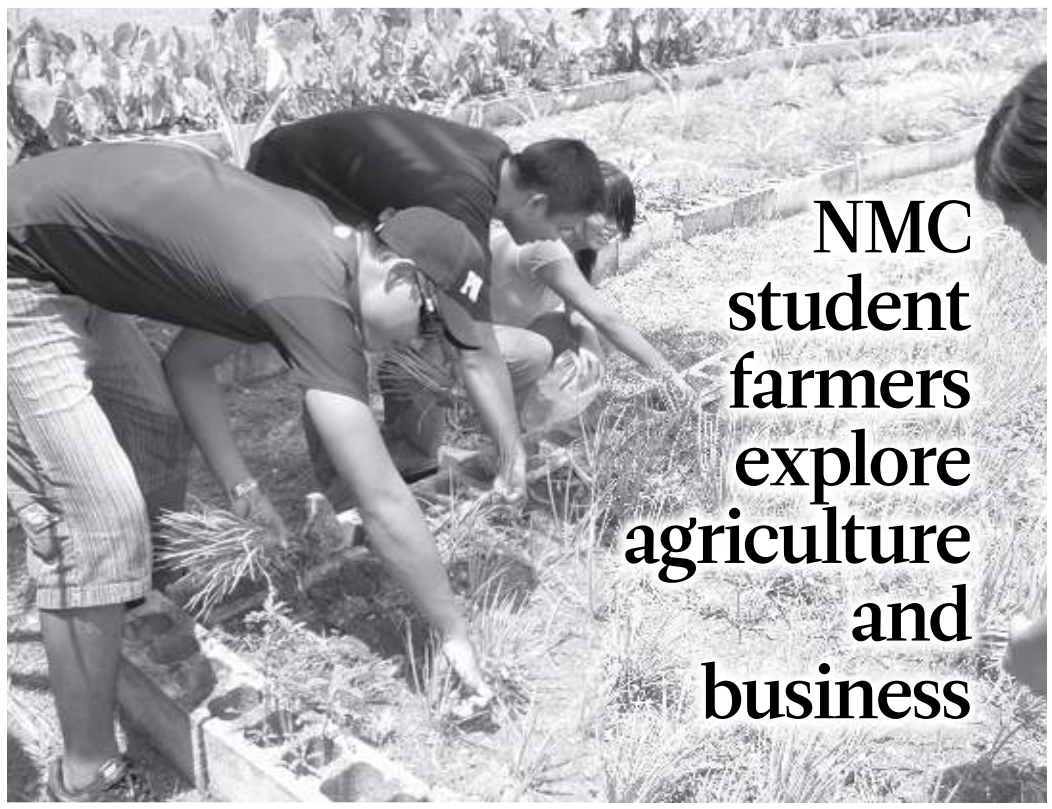
First priority will be to establish (or re-establish) the 2010 committees. Each committee will then be responsible for establishing its projects and goals.

Beautify CNMI consists of a colition of like-minded people interested in coming together to create and work on projects that improve the overall beauty of our home and generally improve our quality and standards of living. There are no specific membership requirements. Committee leaders meet monthly to collaborate and report on project progress. To join, all you have to do is get involved!

For more information on the activities of Beautify CNMI and to volunteer, call DEQ at 664-8500 or contact Laurie Peterka at laurie.peterka@saipan.com. ***(PR)***

Kagman Saturday Flea Market

Kagman's Saturday Flea Market will be held today, Jan. 16, 2010, at the Kagman Community Center's parking lot. It will be held every government payday Saturday. You may only sell your used items. Tents will be provided. Interested sellers can call 256-7678 for more info. ***(PR)***



NMC

NMC student farmers explore agriculture and business

Student farmers on Rota tend to their plots at the 4-H Youth Development Farm Plot Project.

Several junior high and high school students on the island of Rota are currently exploring the agricultural industry by growing and marketing produce from the Northern Marianas College's 4-H Youth Development Farm Plot Project.

The 4-H youth development project is aimed at promoting agricultural practices and methods, such as irrigation, mulching, pest control, and farm safety. Other project activities include workshops, demonstrations, and hands-on exercises relative to food production, processing, and marketing.

Led by NMC's Cooperative Research Extension and Education Service, with the assistance of other NMC staff at the Rota Instructional Site, the project kicked off with the clearing and construction of farm plots. The local Rota government has also been instrumental in the project, with the Department of Public Works transporting topsoil to the plots and staff from the Rota Municipal Council assisting with the construction of the plots.

The Project's student members usually meet once a week at work sessions to tend to their plots for a few hours. Schedules are carefully tailored so as not to conflict with student school schedules.

Workshops and presentations are also conducted regularly, allowing ample time in between for members to practice any new concepts or principles introduced.

"Farming is a lot of hard work," said one student member. "But, in the end, it's totally worth it."

At the work sessions, students are engaged in many hands-on activities, including weeding and watering. To ensure that students attain a complete experience of planting and harvesting, all crops grown at the plots have short growing seasons of only a few months or so. After harvesting, students then meet to discuss the distribution of the crops.

"The students have demonstrated a tremendous amount of progress in their farming techniques and abilities, as well as a profound development in life skills," said CREES project coordinator Dean Manglona. "Many of them have expressed interest in setting up their own vegetable and fruit gardens at home—for either personal use or sale to local markets."

Crops grown at the plots include corn, bell pepper, horseradish, pineapple, eggplant, and other fruits and vegetables.

"We are pleased to see our youth engaged in positive experiences that aid their understanding of agriculture and business," said NMC interim president Lorraine Cabrera. ***(NMC)***

Opinion

Hafa Adai!
Saipan Tribune
CNMI'S FIRST DAILY NEWSPAPER
Volume XX, Issue No. 13

Published daily at 2/F JP Center,
Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, CNMI
Mailing Address: PMB 34, Box 10001, Saipan, MP 96950

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EDITORIAL

Haiti's calamity

The deadly earthquake that struck Haiti Tuesday afternoon devastated a nation that, in the best of times, exists on the edge. Although the death toll is anyone's guess at this point, it seems likely to be in the tens of thousands at a minimum, given the proximity of the quake's epicenter to the densely packed capital of Port-au-Prince, the rickety dwellings in which so many of the city's 2 million people lived and the near-knockout blow the quake delivered to the country's capacity to respond. The Red Cross estimates that as many as 3 million people, a third of Haiti's population, may be affected; many of them are homeless. Even in a country as notoriously blighted and calamity-prone as Haiti, this is a disaster of the first order.

The international relief effort must be commensurate with the scale of this catastrophe. Devising and coordinating an effective response will be a logistical nightmare given the damage, including the crippled communications and electricity networks. The port and airport are damaged, and the road connecting the airport to the city is smashed. First responders such as the 9,000 U.N. peacekeepers in Haiti are an asset already in place, but with the collapse of their headquarters, they are struggling to cope with their own problems. Aid groups such as Doctors Without Borders and Save the Children, although they already had hundreds of relief workers in Haiti, are similarly incapacitated and unsure of how to get resources and equipment, already in dire short supply, into their staffs' hands.

There are some glimmers of hope. One is the Obama administration's quick recognition of the scope of the disaster, and the president's own pledge to do whatever it takes to meet Haiti's critical needs. Sending the USS Carl Vinson, an aircraft carrier based in Norfolk that can serve as an air transport and logistics hub just offshore, was an important first step. Coast Guard cutters, which can carry helicopters, are being deployed to Haiti. The Obama administration's move to suspend the deportation of undocumented Haitian immigrants was also helpful.

Another hopeful sign is what is shaping up as a massive public response from ordinary Americans. Relief groups that appealed for help have reported an enormous response, and not just in cash donations. Search-and-rescue teams were among the emergency workers heading into the country Wednesday; some 300 nurses volunteered their services to go to Haiti. Donations large and small are desperately needed. For those who want to help, a good place to start is the American Red Cross.

Haiti has suffered more mishaps, man-made and natural, than any country deserves—and now this. Let's hope the ingenuity, skill and speed of the international response are equal to the challenge.

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Palin's god laughs at critics, watches Fox

By MARGARET CARLSON
(c) 2010, Bloomberg News

Margaret Carlson, author of Anyone Can Grow Up: How George Bush and I Made It to the White House *and former White House correspondent for* Time *magazine, is a Bloomberg News columnist.*

WASHINGTON—It's all now perfectly clear. Where once it looked silly for a governor to quit in favor of writing and friending a million followers on Facebook, it now makes sense.

It's all divinely ordained. That was Sarah Palin's explanation to her campaign manager, now frenemy, Stephen Schmidt, who told "60 Minutes" that her selection as John McCain's running mate came as no surprise to her because it was just one more part of "God's plan." No wonder she doesn't trouble herself to know there are two Koreas, or why.

As the country's first pure populist—not just pretending to be non-intellectual, as William Jennings Bryan did—Palin also, according to Schmidt, couldn't pronounce nuclear and believed Saddam Hussein was responsible for 9/11.

The latter she has in common with former President George W. Bush. When your favorite philosopher is Jesus Christ (Bush), or when God is watching over you personally (Palin), such trivial details don't matter to your ardent base.

Even with the protection from above, Palin has had to absorb multiple blows this week, not only from Schmidt's interview but also from a book rocking Washington with its behind-the-scenes look at the 2008 campaign.

"Game Change," by John Heilemann and Mark Halperin, describes the Palin we didn't see through staffers, such as Schmidt, who presumably have little to gain by talking.

There is Palin, swinging from perky to catatonic. Once when aides arrived at her hotel room in Philadelphia to work with her, the room, with the shades drawn and full of half-eaten room-service food, reeked of moldering French fries.

After getting made up for the Katie Couric interview, Palin smeared the makeup all over her face and refused attempts to prep her, according to the book. After the interview went badly, she stopped sleeping and consumed only half a can of Diet Dr. Pepper a day. When aides tried to talk to her, she crossed her arms and went stubbornly silent. A doctor was summoned to Sedona, Ariz., to observe her as she studied for her debate with Joe Biden.

While Palin comes off as unstable in "Game Change," others come off as unpalatable.

Bill Clinton loses Ted Kennedy's support for his wife when he says of Obama, "A few years ago, this guy would have been getting us coffee." As Democrats such as Sen. Chuck Schumer of New York worked behind the scenes to deny Hillary Clinton the nomination, her aides were organizing to push back against her major vulnerability—the Bill "problem." These Hillary loyalists had concluded that Bill was engaged in a long "romantic relationship," and they set up a war room to handle the press frenzy that never came.

The book also hits Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid of Nevada, who observed to the authors that Obama was "light-skinned" and turned on a "Negro dialect" only when he needed to. Republican complaints of a double standard on such matters are accurate, but there is also a difference in behavior: Those who generally support voting, housing and civil rights for African-Americans get the benefit of the doubt when they have a Macaca moment.

People wonder why these stories don't appear during the campaign, when it would matter. It's because the candidates would accuse the journalist of lying, and most aides, to keep their jobs, would back that denial. Editors cave to pre-presidential power, and reporters lose.

Fox News Channel, Palin's new gig, isn't going to make Palin a star the way it did Glenn Beck and others. It can only diminish her star, by making her one of way too many talking heads. At the moment, Palin is able to command center stage, an army of TV cameras and reporters trailing her from mall to suburban mall, as she sells a stunning 2 million copies of "Going Rogue."

In Iowa, where hundreds waited 10 hours in 16-degree weather for her signature, 68 percent of GOP voters view Palin favorably, according to the Des Moines Register. That places her ahead of two other possible 2012 candidates, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich and former Massachusetts Governor Mitt Romney.

That a majority of the general public rejects her as unqualified to be president, and that she makes the party leaders' teeth ache, only help her. She took down the GOP establishment in upstate New York with a Facebook entry.

If you believe God is designing your life, Fox is the perfect move. It was just two weeks ago that Fox's Brit Hume recommended that Tiger Woods would be better off if he switched Gods, from the Buddhist one to the Christian one.

Fox News viewers don't seem to find it diminishing that God would be worrying over career moves, as if he wrote "Who Moved My Cheese?," or doing damage control for a golfer.

Personally, I learned the limits of heavenly intervention when I realized that making the sign of the cross at the foul line made no difference in whether my Catholic school team beat the heathen one from across town. God has more important things to do than trouble himself with who wins a basketball game, who hosts the "Tonight Show," even who's president of the United States.

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What will Haiti be like 20 years from now

By JOHN C. BERSIA
McClatchy-Tribune News Service

John C. Bersia, who won a Pulitzer Prize in editorial writing for the Orlando Sentinel *in 2000, is the special assistant to the president for global perspectives at the University of Central Florida. Readers may send him e-mail at johncbersia@msn.com.*

Nature has a way of delivering some of its most devastating blows to those who already suffer disproportionately, as happened during Haiti's tragic earthquake. It will take weeks, maybe months, to account for those who are lost and evaluate the full extent of the damage.

Fortunately, through the efforts of many, the most needed items—food, water, medical supplies, clothing, shelter and other emergency materials—have begun moving into the hands of Haitians. President Barack Obama's promise of unwavering support to help Haiti recover is precisely on target.

But what about the long term, 10 to 20 years from now? What will occur after the worst of the earthquake's ravages pass and images of its destruction lose their prominence? Will the hemisphere's poorest nation return to virtual invisibility? Will it grab the interest of people in other countries only when their cruise ships approach the island's beaches, desperate Haitians try to navigate rickety boats to foreign shores or the next crisis erupts? Will we be content to leave Haiti to its status as a struggling state on the verge of failure?

Some would argue that such a fate is almost inevitable. After all, weak, languishing states have little influence in the global mainstream. They and their problems tend to wash to the wayside. The world, busy with its own affairs, usually has time for no more than a word of encouragement or a dollop of foreign aid.

That does not have to happen, though. Instead of merely putting a bandage on Haiti and wishing it well, why not use the earthquake to respond in a manner that rises to the larger challenge? And why not do that purely because it would be the right and humane course of action? Since the earthquake was first reported, I have had a running conversation with several Haiti specialists. They have raised some worthy suggestions that would help it avoid a future of neglect and marginality.

For example, Haiti could clearly use an infusion of assistance from a 21st-century version of Live Aid, the multi-venue concert of the 1980s that directed assistance toward famine relief in Ethiopia. A similar concert for Haiti, led by someone such as famed Haitian musician and singer Wyclef Jean, could bring in huge sums of money. Jean, to his credit, has already rushed into the relief effort for Haiti through Yele (www.yele.org), his nonprofit, charitable organization.

I suspect hundreds of thousands of people would attend a concert for Haiti, and millions more would tune in through television and the Internet. A key to success would be intense oversight of concert profits and their routing through non-governmental organizations that have the capacity and honesty to put them to the best use for Haiti's people.

Another idea worthy of consideration: Have the U.N. Security Council convene a special meeting with the remnants of Haiti's government. Its purpose would be to consider a broader, more direct role for the international community in Haiti. The experts are not contemplating a modest gesture such as expanding the U.N. peacekeeping force currently in Haiti. Rather, they envision something dramatic, along the lines of the International Trusteeship System, which emerged in 1945 to assist territories in developing political, economic and other capabilities on their way to self-government and self-determination.

Haiti, despite its lengthy independence, finds itself in a similar situation. Its government is not capable, its prospects bleak across the board. Haitians would benefit immensely from a special partnership with the United Nations that would infuse the country with a large, multinational cadre of experts who are equipped to deal with the multitude of issues that Haiti's government has never been able to resolve.

Haitians are more desperate now than ever. If the international community merely provides an escort through the current crisis and returns home, it will doom them to an endless cycle of misery and calamity.

Al-Qaida has a plan. Where's ours?

By BRUCE HOFFMAN
Special to The Washington Post

Hoffman, a professor of security studies at Georgetown University, is a senior fellow at the U.S. Military Academy's Combating Terrorism Center.

In the wake of the failed Christmas Day airplane bombing and the killing a few days later of seven CIA operatives in Afghanistan, Washington is, as it was after the Sept. 11, 2001, attacks, obsessed with "dots"—and our inability to connect them.

"The U.S. government had sufficient information to have uncovered this plot and potentially disrupt the Christmas Day attack, but our intelligence community failed to connect those dots," the president said Tuesday.

But for all the talk, two key dots have yet to be connected: Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, the alleged Northwest Airlines Flight 253 attacker, and Humam Khalil Abu-Mulal al-Balawi, the trusted CIA informant turned assassin. Although a 23-year-old Nigerian engineering student and a 36-year-old Jordanian physician would seem to have little in common, both exemplify a new grand strategy that al-Qaida has pursued successfully for at least a year.

Throughout 2008 and 2009, U.S. officials repeatedly trumpeted al-Qaida's demise. In a May 2008 interview with The Washington Post, then-CIA Director Michael Hayden heralded the group's "near strategic defeat." And the intensified aerial drone attacks that President Obama authorized against al-Qaida targets in Pakistan last year were widely celebrated for having killed over half of its remaining senior leadership.

Yet, oddly for a movement supposedly on its last legs, al-Qaida last month launched two separate attacks less than a week apart—one failed and one successful—triggering the most extensive review of U.S. national security policies since 2001. Al-Qaida's fresh strategy plays to its networking strength and compensates for its numerical weakness. In contrast to its plan on Sept. 11, which was to deliver a knock-out blow to the United States, al-Qaida's leadership has adopted a "death by a thousand cuts" approach. The strategy has five core elements.

First, al-Qaida is focused on overwhelming, distracting and exhausting us. It seeks to flood our already information-overloaded national intelligence systems with myriad threats and background noise so that we overlook key clues, such as those before Christmas that linked Abdulmutallab to an al-Qaida airline-bombing plot.

Second, al-Qaida has stepped up a strategy of economic warfare, issuing statements, videos, audio messages and letters online trumpeting its actions against Western financial systems, even taking credit for the economic crisis. Propaganda doesn't have to be true to be believed, and the assertions resonate with al-Qaida's target audiences.

Heightened security measures after the Christmas Day plot, plus the likely development of ever more sophisticated passenger-screening and intelligence technologies, stand to cost a lot of money, while the war in Afghanistan constitutes a massive drain on American resources. Given the economic instability here and abroad, al-Qaida's strategy of financial attrition could pay outsize dividends.

Third, al-Qaida still seeks to divide the global alliance arrayed against it by targeting key coalition partners. Terrorist attacks on mass-transit systems in Madrid in 2004 and London in 2005 were intended to punish Spain and Britain for participating in the war in Iraq and in the U.S.-led war on terrorism. During the past two years, serious terrorist plots orchestrated by al-Qaida's allies in Pakistan, meant to punish Spain and the Netherlands for participating in the war on terrorism, were thwarted in Barcelona and Amsterdam.

In Afghanistan, suicide bombers and roadside explosives target contingents from countries such as Britain, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands, where popular support for deployments has waned, in hopes of hastening their withdrawal from the NATO-led coalition.

Fourth, al-Qaida aggressively seeks out, destabilizes and exploits failed states and other areas of lawlessness as opportunities to extend its reach and conducts local campaigns of subversion to hasten their decline. It has increased activities in places such as Pakistan, Algeria, the Sahel, Somalia and especially Yemen. It guides allies and related terrorist groups in that area, boosting their local, regional and—as the Northwest Airlines plot demonstrated—international attack capabilities.

The exact number of al-Qaida personnel in each of these areas varies, sometimes including no more than a few hard-core terrorists. But they perform a critical force-multiplying function by providing weapons, training and intelligence for attacks to indigenous terrorist groups—and by disseminating propaganda, building Web sites and launching online magazines modeled on al-Qaida's.

Fifth, al-Qaida seeks recruits from non-Muslim countries—especially converts to Islam whose appearances and names would not arouse the same scrutiny that persons from Islamic countries might—as the ultimate fifth columnists. Citizens of countries that participate in the U.S. visa-waiver program are especially prized because they can move freely between Western countries and blend easily into these societies.

Al-Qaida has become increasingly adept at locating would-be terrorists and feeding them propaganda via the Internet. During the past 18 months, American and British intelligence officials have said, well over 100 individuals from such countries have graduated from terrorist training camps in Pakistan and have been sent West to undertake terrorist operations.

Al-Qaida constantly monitors our defenses effort to identify gaps and opportunities that can be exploited, and tracks our congressional hearings, think-tank analyses and media reports for strategic intelligence. This information, coupled with surveillance efforts, has overcome many security measures.

A survey of terrorist incidents in the past seven months alone underscores al-Qaida's diversity of threats and tactics:

■ hard-core operatives as Balawi, the double agent who played American and Jordanian intelligence to kill more CIA agents than anyone else has in more than a quarter-century.

■ sleeper agents such as David Headley, the U.S. citizen whose reconnaissance efforts for longtime al-Qaida ally Lashkar-i-Taiba were pivotal to the November 2008 suicide assault in Mumbai.

■ motivated recruits such as Abdulmutallab, the alleged Northwest Airlines bomber, and Najibullah Zazi, the Afghan-born U.S. resident arrested in New York last September and charged with plotting a "Mumbai on the Hudson" suicide terrorist operation.

■ "lone wolves" such as Maj. Nidal Hassan, accused of killing 13 people at Fort Hood in November, and Abdulhakim Muhammad, a convert to Islam who, after returning from Yemen last June, killed one soldier and wounded another outside an Army recruiting center in Little Rock.

As al-Qaida finds new ways to exploit our weaknesses, we are stuck in a pattern of belated responses, rather than anticipating its moves and developing preemptive strategies. The "systemic failure" of intelligence analysis and airport security that Obama recently described was not just the product of a compartmentalized bureaucracy or analytical inattention, but a failure to recognize al-Qaida's new strategy.

The national security architecture built in the aftermath of Sept. 11 addresses yesterday's threats—but not today's and certainly not tomorrow's. It is superb at reacting and responding, but not at outsmarting. With our military overcommitted in Iraq and Afghanistan and our intelligence community overstretched by multiplying threats, a new approach to counterterrorism is essential.

"In the never-ending race to protect our country, we have to stay one step ahead of a nimble adversary," Obama said Thursday. He spoke of the need for intelligence and airport security reform, but he should have spoken about the need for a new strategy to match al-Qaida's.

Remarkably, more than eight years after Sept. 11, we still don't fully understand our dynamic and evolutionary enemy. We claim success when it is regrouping and tally killed leaders while more devious plots are being hatched. Al-Qaida must be destroyed. This will be accomplished not just by killing and capturing terrorists—as we must continue to do—but by breaking the cycle of radicalization and recruitment that sustains the movement.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam Homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

The Weather

5-Day Forecast for Saipan and Tinian

TODAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 10 to 20 mph.	Partly sunny and breezy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.	Mostly cloudy and breezy with isolated showers.
▲86° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼76°	▲85° ▼75°	▲85° ▼75°

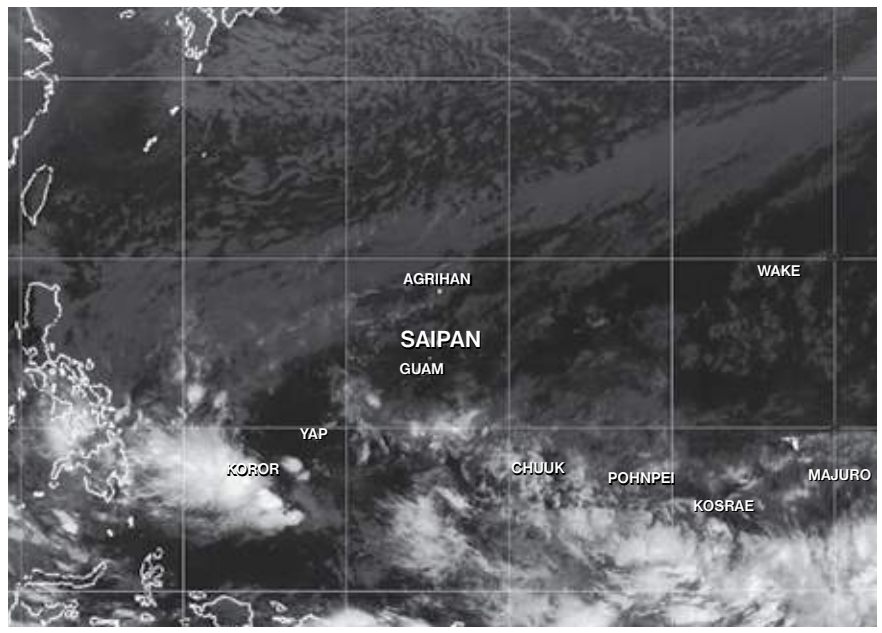
Micronesia

Guam and Rota	Showers	▲83	▼76
Palau	Showers	▲87	▼77
Yap	Cloudy	▲89	▼77
Chuuk	Cloudy	▲89	▼80
Pohnpei	Cloudy	▲87	▼77
Kosrae	Showers	▲87	▼77
Majuro	Showers	▲84	▼77

Around The Globe

Auckland	Showers	▲71	▼63
Beijing	Mostly Sunny	▲36	▼21
Hong Kong	Partly Sunny	▲67	▼57
Honolulu	Sunny	▲78	▼68
London	Rain	▲43	▼37
Los Angeles	Partly Sunny	▲70	▼48
Manila	Showers	▲82	▼72
Melbourne	Partly Sunny	▲88	▼56
Miami	Partly Sunny	▲79	▼69
New York	Partly Sunny	▲45	▼36
Osaka	Mostly Cloudy	▲41	▼29
Paris	Mostly Cloudy	▲41	▼38
Pusan	Sunny	▲45	▼26
Rome	Sunny	▲50	▼30
Salem	Showers	▲52	▼37
San Francisco	Showers	▲59	▼48
Seoul	Mostly Sunny	▲29	▼13
Tokyo	Cloudy	▲41	▼24
Washington, DC	Partly Sunny	▲45	▼34

Yesterday's Satellite Image



PICTURE TIME: 1:00PM, FRIDAY, JANUARY 15, 2010
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

A shear line extends southwestward from 25N164E through the Northern Mariana Islands near Alamagan past 130E at 11N. Extensive low level clouds and patchy rain are found along and up to 300 miles northwest of the boundary. An equatorial trough extends eastward from EQN130E to EQ175E. A weak circulation is evident along the equator near 172E. Convergent low level flow associated with the trough is producing scattered showers south of 3N east of 155E. A strong pressure gradient between high pressure over China and the equatorial trough is causing gale force winds in the Philippine Sea north of Yap and Palau between 11N and 20N west of 140E. A line of showers and isolated thunderstorms near Palau extends from 8N130E to 5N137E.

Tides

Saipan Harbor

2:26 AM	Today	Low Tide:	0.3 Feet
9:25 AM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet
2:53 PM	Today	Low Tide:	1.1 Feet
7:37 PM	Today	High Tide:	1.8 Feet

Sunrise/Sunset

Today	6:47 AM	6:07 PM
Sunday	6:47 AM	6:07 PM
Monday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM
Tuesday	6:47 AM	6:08 PM
Wednesday	6:47 AM	6:09 PM

Moonrise/Moonset

Today	7:14 AM	6:54 PM
Sunday	7:52 AM	7:42 PM
Monday	8:29 AM	8:29 PM
Tuesday	9:04 AM	9:15 PM
Wednesday	9:38 AM	10:01 PM

GET YOUR PICTURES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS PUBLISHED—FOR FREE

The *Saipan Tribune* accepts for FREE publication the following:

PICTURES

- ISLAND SNAPSHOTS
  Birthdays, baptisms, christenings, family gatherings, reunions, club activities, and other community-related events.
- BIRTHDAY GREETINGS
  A way for families and friends to greet their loved ones, accompanied by a picture of the person celebrating his/her birthday.
- BUSINESS
  Corporate donations, volunteer work, promotions, granting of awards, team-building exercises, meetings and other activities by members of the business community.
- SAMU'T SARI
  Pictures from the islands' Filipino community, primarily focusing on Filipino activities, gatherings, get-togethers, volunteer work, etc.
- TRAVELOGUE
  Pictures of off-island travels. Contributors may submit up to 10 pictures for consideration.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- COMMUNITY BRIEFS
  Announcements of upcoming activities of organizations, community clubs, government agencies, and private companies.
- CAMPUS BULLETIN
  Announcements of upcoming activities in public and private schools, as well as calendar of activities. May include PTSA meetings, enrollment procedures.

REQUIREMENTS

For pictures:

- Photos should be original and not copyrighted. Contributors must have the right to allow the *Saipan Tribune* to publish the pictures.
- Digital pictures should be high-resolution (minimum of 800kb).
- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and phone number.
- Photos must have been taken in the last two months.
- For birthday greetings, must be submitted no later than 12 noon of the previous day to make it to next day's edition.

For announcements:

- Must have complete details (who, what, where, when), the name of contact person, and a phone number.
- Must be submitted no later than 12 noon to make it to next day's edition.

HOW TO SUBMIT

- E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com or jayvee_vallejera@saipantribune.com.
- Fax: (670) 235-3740
- Mail: PMB 34, P.O. Box 10001, Saipan, CNMI 96950
- Drop off: 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan
  To check if contributions are received, call (670) 235-6397, 235-2440, 235-8747

POLICY

- The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to accept or reject a contribution for publication; the right to edit all contributions, the date of publication, size of the picture, and page placement; and the right to publish contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats.
- The *Saipan Tribune* will decide how often community announcements are going to be published.
- For Travelogue, the *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to choose which pictures to publish.

NMI CRIME STOPPERS

Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:

- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any PTI cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.com

NEWS DESK For news tips, corrections and requests for news coverage, call (670) 235-NEWS (6397), 235-2440, fax 235,3740. E-mail: editor@saipantribune.com. Website:www.saipantribune.com.

CUSTOMER SERVICE For inquiries, purchase of back issues and complaints, call (670) 235-8747, 235-2440, fax 235-3740.

SUBSCRIPTION Published Monday to Saturday, *Saipan Tribune* offers door-to-door on-island delivery at an annual rate of $160. For additional subscription information, call (670) 235-8747 or 235-2769, or fax 235-3740.

ADVERTISING For inquiries contact (670) 235-2769. E-mail: sales@saipantribune.com

FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF JANUARY 13, 2009

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-ROTA (ROP)

C09597	11:30am	12:05pm	1, 7

ROTA (ROP)-GUAM

C09597	12:40pm	1:10pm	1, 7

SAIPAN-GUAM

C09317	4:25am	5:15am	Daily
C09313	8:30am	9:20am	Daily
C09597	11:30am	1:10pm	1, 7 via ROP
C09601	12:20pm	1:10pm	4, 5
C09603	3:15pm	4:05pm	Daily
C09605	6:20pm	7:10pm	Daily
C09599	9:20pm	10:10pm	Daily

SAIPAN-NAGOYA (NGO)

NW287	6:00am	7:30pm	1,3,4,5,6,7 via NRT
NW638	8:00am	10:50am	2,3,4,5,6,7

SAIPAN-NARITA (NRT)

NW287	6:00am	8:40am	Daily
NW297	4:45pm	7:30pm	Daily
NW289	5:00pm	7:45pm	Daily

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

OZ608	3:20am	6:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ604	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ604	2:40am	6:30am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
OZ119	4:00am	11:25am	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 6:40am, leave OSA 9:30am	
OZ606	3:20pm	7:00pm	2, 4, 6, 7

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

FM844	2:50am	5:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

CZ3008	3:30am	6:40am	2, 6

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

OZ604/701	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ604/701	2:40am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/715	3:20pm	11:30pm	7 via ICN
OZ608/705	3:20am	1:30am+1	1, 4, 5, 7 via PUS
C09603/893	3:15pm	9:10pm	3, 5 via GUM-PALAU
C09605/933	6:20pm	9:40pm	Daily via GUM
C09599/PR111	9:20pm	7:50am+1	1, 3, 5, 6, 7 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG

OZ604/721	2:10am	12:00pm	1 via ICN
OZ604/721	2:40am	12:00pm	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
OZ606/749	3:20pm	11:00pm	4, 6, 7 via ICN

ARRIVALS

ROTA (ROP)-SAIPAN

C09598	3:10am	3:45am	5, 6
C09312	1:20pm	1:55pm	6

GUAM-ROTA (ROP)

C09598	2:00am	2:30am	5, 6
C09312	12:10pm	12:40pm	6

GUAM-SAIPAN

C09316	2:00am	2:50am	1, 2, 3, 4, 7
C09598	2:00am	3:45am	5, 6 via ROP
C09596	7:00am	7:50am	Daily
C09600	10:05am	10:55am	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7
C09312	12:10pm	1:55pm	6 via ROP
C09602	1:50pm	2:40pm	1, 4, 5, 7
C09604	4:50pm	5:40pm	Daily
C09606	8:00pm	8:50pm	Daily

NAGOYA (NGO)-SAIPAN

NW288	12:05pm	1:35am+1	1,3,4,5,6,7 via NRT
NW277	8:30pm	1:00am+1	3,6
NW639	9:00pm	1:35am+1	Daily

NARITA (NRT)-SAIPAN

NW290	10:00am	2:35pm	Daily
NW298	10:05am	2:50pm	Daily
NW288	9:0pm	1:35am+1	Daily

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

OZ607	9:00pm	2:10am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

OZ605	9:00am	2:20pm	2, 4, 6, 7
OZ120	7:10pm	2:20am+1	Daily via Osaka
		Arrive OSA 8:50pm, leave OSA 9:50pm	
OZ603	7:40pm	1:10am+1	7
OZ603	8:10pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

FM843	7:15pm	1:50am+1	1, 5

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

CZ3007	7:30pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

OZ716/605	12:30am	2:20pm	4,6 via ICN
OZ706/607	3:35am	2:10am+1	3,4,6,7 via PUS
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ702/603	1:10pm	1:30am+1 via ICN	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6
PR110/C09596	10:10pm	7:50am+1 via GUM	1, 3, 5, 6, 7
C0934/9596	11:10pm	7:50am+1	Daily via GUM
C0892/9596	10:10pm	7:50am+1	3,5 via PALAU-GUM
OZ704/605	11:55pm	2:20pm+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via ICN

HONG KONG-SAIPAN

OZ724/605	12:30am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ750/605	1:00am	2:20pm	2,4,6,7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:10am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/603	1:30pm	1:30am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN

Editor's Note: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); CO: Continental; FM: Shanghai Airlines; PR: Philippine Airlines; NW: Northwest; OZ: Asiana
ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. The Saipan Tribune is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)

FREEDOM AIR FLIGHT SCHEDULE

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
Guam-Rota			
FRE 100	7:00am	7:30am	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 100	7:50am	8:20am	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 200	9:00am	9:30am	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 200	9:50am	10:15am	Daily
Guam-Rota			
FRE 300	4:00pm	4:30pm	Daily
Rota-Saipan			
FRE 300	4:50pm	5:25pm	Daily
Saipan-Rota			
FRE 400	6:00pm	6:30pm	Daily
Rota-Guam			
FRE 400	6:45pm	7:15pm	Daily
Saipan-Tinian			
FRE 101	6:45am	6:55am	Daily
FRE 103	7:30am	7:40am	Daily
FRE 105	8:00am	8:10am	Daily
FRE 107	8:40am	8:50am	Daily
FRE 109*	9:10am	9:20am	Daily
FRE 111*	10:45am	10:55am	Daily

Airline	ETD	ETA	Frequency
FRE 113	11:40am	11:50am	Daily
FRE 115	1:00pm	1:10pm	Daily
FRE 117	2:30pm	2:40pm	Daily
FRE 119	4:00pm	4:10pm	Daily
FRE 121	4:40pm	4:50pm	Daily
FRE 123 *	5:40pm	5:50pm	Daily
FRE 125 *	6:00pm	6:10pm	Daily
Tinian-Saipan w/ connecting flights to Rota or Guam**			
FRE 102	7:05am	7:15am	Daily
FRE 104	7:50am	8:00am	Daily
FRE 106**	8:20am	8:30am	Daily
FRE 108**	9:00am	9:10am	Daily
FRE 110	10:00am	10:10am	Daily
FRE 112	11:05am	11:15am	Daily
FRE 114	12:00pm	12:10pm	Daily
FRE 116	1:30pm	1:40pm	Daily
FRE 118	2:50pm	3:00pm	Daily
FRE 120**	4:20pm	4:30pm	Daily
FRE 122**	5:00pm	5:10pm	Daily
FRE 124	6:05pm	6:15pm	Daily
FRE 126	6:20pm	6:30pm	Daily

Schedule of Religious Services

CATHOLIC

Mt. Carmel Cathedral
Sunday Mass: 6am, 9am, 11am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm

Korean Center
Sunday: 10:30am
Wednesday: 10am
Thursday-Friday: 8pm
Saturday: 3pm and 7:30pm

Kristo Rai Parish
Sunday Mass: 6am, 8am and 9:30am
Monday- Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6am and 6pm
Saturday: 6am and 6pm

Nuestra Senora De Soledad Parish
Wednesday Mass: 6pm
First Friday Healing Mass: 6pm
Saturday Mass: 6pm
Sunday Masses: 7:30am & 9am

Saint Jude Parish
Sunday: 6am, 8am, 10am
Wednesday and Thursday: 6pm

San Antonio Parish
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Tuesday and Friday: 6pm

San Francisco de Borja-Rota
Sunday: 6am and 8am
Monday-Saturday: 6am
Wednesday: 6pm

San Isidro-Rota
Sunday: 5am and 10am
Monday-Wednesday: 7pm
Thursday-Saturday: 5am and 7pm

San Jose (Oleai) Parish
Sunday: 6am and 7:30am
Tuesday-Wednesday and Friday-Saturday: 6pm

San Roque Parish
Sunday: 9am
Wednesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10:30am

San Vicente Parish
Sunday: 6am, 9am and 6pm
Monday-Saturday: 6pm

Santa Remedios
Sunday: 7:30am
Tuesday: 6pm
Saturday: 10am-Baptism

Santa Soledad
Sunday: 7:30am

PROTESTANT

Born Again Christian (Upper Room Int'l Ministries), Saipan
Wednesday Prayer and Healing Night: 8-10:30pm
Saturday Tagalog Service: 8-10:30pm
Sunday English Service: 9:30-11am
Sunday School for Children: 10-11am
Sunday Filipino Service: 7-9pm

Calvary Baptist Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 9am
Sunday Morning Worship: 10am
Sunday Evening Worship: 6pm
Wednesday Prayer Service: 7pm

Chinese Christian Church of Saipan
Worship Services: Sunday, 10am and 7:30pm
Bible Study: Tuesday-Friday, 9:25pm

Cornerstone Christian Church, Saipan
Worship/Study Opportunities
Adult Sunday School: 9am
Youth Sunday School: 9am
English Worship Service Sunday: 10am
Sunday Service: 5:30pm
Worship/Fellowship Sunday: 9:30pm
Evangelism/Follow-up: Sunday/Monday: 1:30/7:30pm
Worship Team: Monday/Saturday-9pm;
Cell Groups Tuesday: 7:30pm
Mid-week Service: 7:30pm
Prayer Meeting Wednesday: 7:30pm
Leader's Bible Study Friday: 7:30 pm
Cornerstone School of Ministry Saturday: 7:30pm

Episcopal/Anglican Church on Saipan
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Worship Service Sunday: Holy Communion 9:00am
Place: Vicarage, Chalan Laulau,
Call 235-0545 for directions

Grace Christian Assembly, Saipan
Worship Service: 9am
GBI Classes: 4-6pm
Prayer Meeting: Monday-Saturday: 6am
Sunday: 7am
Home Cell Bible Study: Wednesday-Friday: 7pm
Youth Service: Friday: 5:30pm

Iglesia Ni Cristo, Saipan
Wednesday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Thursday: 5:30am (English); 7:45 pm (English)
Saturday: 7:45pm (Tagalog)
Sunday: 6:45am (English)
Children Worship Service: Sunday, 9am (English)

Immanuel United Methodist Church Koblerville
Sunday Services
9:00 AM
Place of the church-next to Mt. Carmel Cathedral on Chalan Kanoa Dr. • Tel: 322-6158
Pastor JJ Matsumoto

Immanuel Methodist Church (Filipino Congregation)
Sunday: 7:00am-Choir Rehearsal
8:00am-Church Service (Tagalog)
9:15am-Sunday School
Wednesday: 6:30pm, home group
8:00pm-Prayer Meeting
Thursday: 7:30pm-Choir Practice (Church)
Saturday: 8:00pm-Choir Practice (Parsonage)

Jesus is Lord Church, Saipan
English Service: 9-11am, Sunday
Tagalog Service: 6-8pm, Sunday

Korean Presbyterian Church, Saipan
Sunday School: 8:20am
Sunday Adult: 10am
Sunday Adult: 11:30am
Sunday Evening: 7:30pm
Wednesday: 8pm

Life in the Son Christian Fellowship, Saipan
Sunday Worship Service: 10am–12noon
Tuesday: Leadership Institute 7pm-10pm
Wednesday: Corporate prayer 7pm-8pm
Last Friday of the month-prayer: 7pm-11pm
Friday: Youth on Fire: 7pm-9pm
Tel. No. 235-LIFE (5433)

Marianas Baptist Church, Saipan
English Worship Service: 9-10:30am
Evening Worship Service: 6-7pm
Children Sunday School: 9-10:30am
Tagalog Sunday School: 11am-12pm
English Sunday School: 11am-12pm
Korean Worship Service: 11am-12pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting:
English, 7pm-8pm
Korean: 8:30pm-9:30pm

Missions Connection Ministry
Every Sunday Celebrations:
10am (English), 6pm (Tagalog)
Wednesday Bible Study: 7pm
Youth Impact Friday: 7pm
Saturday Prayer Meeting: 7pm

Northern Marianas Christian Church
Sunday Worship Service 10am Fina Sisu Housing FS#1 (Child care will be provided)
Friday Services @ 7pm Fina Sisu FS#1 for more info pls. contact Ryan 484-2620

Saipan Bible Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30-10am
Divine Worship: 10am-11:30am
Evening Service: 7pm-8:30pm
Wednesday Prayer Meeting: 8pm-9pm

Saipan Christian Church
Sunday: 7:30am-10am
Sunday: 6:30 pm -9pm
Monday: 8 pm -10pm (Prayer Meeting)
Thursday: 8pm-10pm (Cell Groups)

Saipan Church of Christ
Sunday Bible Class: 9am
Sunday Worship: 10am
Sunday Worship English: 6pm
Sunday Worship Tagalog: 7pm
Wednesday Bible Study: 7:30pm

Saipan Community Church
(Sunday Services)
Palau Service: 7:30am-9am
English Service: 10am-11:30am
Chuukese Service: 1pm-2:30pm
Filipino Service: 5:00pm-7:00pm

Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Saipan
(Saturday Church Services)
Sabbath School Program: 9-10am
Lesson Study: 10-10:40am
Divine Service: 11-12pm
Visitation: 3-4pm
Adventist Youth Program: 4:30-5:30pm
Sundown Worship: 6-7pm

First Baptist Church
(Formerly Saipan Baptist Church)
Afetna St., San Antonio
Sunday
9am Sunday school
10am Regular worship
6pm worship
Wednesday
7pm worship
Everyone is warmly welcome to attend our worship services. Transportation is readily available to anyone who needs a ride to our church. For further information, please call Pastor David M. Mclure at 234-1939/235-7779.

Thy Word Ministries Saipan Faith Center
Phone 234-0209
New Christian Charismatic Church Service located in Chalan Paio, Beach Road in the Sablan building on the 2nd floor above Subway Sandwiches.
Senior Pastors: George & Gail Kamakahi
Asst. Pastors: Eric & Penny Sakaguchi
Service Times
Sunday 10:00am Worship Service
Sunday 7pm Discipleship Classes
Tuesday 10:00am Bible Studies
Tuesday 6:00pm Intercessory Prayer
Tuesday 7:00pm Music Practice
Wednesday 7:00pm Mid-Week Service
Saturday 10:00am Evangelism

Upper Room International Ministries
Sunday 5:30am-6:30am
Morning prayer
7am-9am English service
7am-9am Sunday school
10am-12noon English service, Koblerville
Wednesday 7pm-9pm Prayer meeting
Saturday 7pm-9pm Tagalog service
Venue: Jason Presbyterian Church
Gualo Rai, Saipan

Victory Chapel Christian Fellowship Church
Sunday School: 9:30am
Sunday AM Worship:10:30am
Sunday PM Worship:7:00am
Wed Worship: 7:30pm
Prayer 45 min. Prior to Service Times
Morning Prayer: 6-8am M-S

Flashback

A LOOK BACK AT PAST YEARS' HEADLINES

Jan. 16, 2001

Legislators in D.C. for Bush's inauguration
House Speaker Benigno R. Fitial, along with three other members of the lower house, leaves today for Washington D.C. to attend the inauguration of President-elect George W. Bush in what he hopes to be the start of better ties with the federal government. On the eve of his departure, the House leader said they plan to meet with officials of the new administration who have "both direct and indirect" influence on CNMI affairs. Vice Speaker Alejo M. Mendiola, Federal and Foreign Relations Committee chair Rep. Norman S. Palacios and Health and Welfare Committee chair Rep. Malua T. Peter are joining him in the trip.

HS students prepare for college level art course
A selected group of Marianas High School students are currently working to get a head start in their future college careers through the Advanced Placement program which introduces them to the demands of a college level work load. MHS Fine Arts Department Chair Dorothy Haws said the 20-student class pioneers the entire CNMI's secondary block in this landmark project to prepare high school students cope with the rigors of university life. This school year, the Public School System paved the way for the first AP Studio Art course to be taught at MHS that through the process of pre-selection only cast students with promising skills to survive the advanced class.

Jan. 16, 2002

Shoreline waste to be shipped off-island
Acting Public Works Secretary John S. Reyes yesterday said the department has already negotiated with a private company for the planned off-island shipment of hazardous waste dumped at the Tanapag shoreline. He disclosed that funds are available to go ahead with the project. But due to limited funding, Reyes said the department would only have part of the stockpile of automotive batteries shipped at once, while the remaining waste would have to be temporarily relocated away from the shore.

Parents lectured vs. child neglect
The parents of two Chalan Laulau children were lectured on the dangers of leaving kids unsupervised after a police officer found their toddlers playing just six feet away from the outer lane of the highway. A 33-year-old Carolinian male and a 31-year-old Chuukese female, the children's parents, are being investigated on alleged child neglect. They were not arrested pending the results of an ongoing investigation. According to a preliminary report, police officer Anthony Macaranas was passing along Middle Road last January 11 when he observed two kids, garbed in dirty clothes, playing beside the road.

Jan. 16, 2003

Immunity request for 2 in shooting case refiled
Associate Judge David Wiseman yesterday denied requests made by the Attorney General's Office that asked the court to dismiss the charges against two of the seven defendants in the accidental shooting case, so they could be granted immunity and be used as witnesses against the rest of the accused. Wiseman said the prosecution made the requests in bad faith, stressing that defendants Frances Duenas Salas and James P. DeLeon Guerrero face the risk of prosecutorial harassment should the government refile charges against them, supposing he acceded to the requests. "There is no question as to the motivations behind the Commonwealth terminating the prosecution.

DPS officials heed austerity calls
At least 28 high-ranking officials of the Department of Public Safety were among the first to answer the Governor's call for a reduced work hours in light of the CNMI government's depleting coffers. The 28 police officials-mostly lieutenants and upper ranking positions-will start receiving lower salaries on Jan. 28. They were advised to work only 75 hours per pay period. The across-the-board five-hour reduction in work hours will be in effect until September 31, 2003. At the same time, Public Safety Commissioner Edward Camacho urged low-ranking officers to provide voluntary public service in uniform in excess of the mandatory 80 work hours per pay period. Under the volunteer status, police officers from the corrections, traffic, patrol, and fire divisions would be paid for the regular 80 work hours. Anything in excess of this will be automatically considered a public service.

Business

Continental to resume direct Guam-Hong Kong flights

Guam/CNMI Visa Waiver Program makes non-stop service possible

HAGATNA, Guam—Continental Airlines announced yesterday that it will resume non-stop flights from Guam to Hong Kong beginning on April 2, 2010, subject to government approval. The direct flights from Guam to Hong Kong will be operated twice-weekly by Continental Micronesia utilizing its fleet of Boeing 737-800 aircraft, each with a total of 155 seats, including 14 business class seats and 141 coach class seats.

Continental Airlines first started operating direct Guam-Hong Kong flights in 1991, but temporarily suspended the service from August 2008. With the reintroduction of direct service, Continental Airlines will be the only airline providing non-stop flights from Guam to Hong Kong, one of the most popular leisure destinations in Southeast Asia, known for its variety of tourist attractions including shopping, dining and sightseeing.

The flight schedule is as follows:

FLIGHT	FREQUENCY	DEPARTING	ARRIVING	FLIGHT TIME
C0909	Monday & Friday	Guam 6:35pm	Hong Kong 9:25pm	4:50 hrs
C0910	Monday & Friday	Hong Kong 10:30pm	Guam 5:10am + 1*	4:40 hrs

"I am very pleased to announce our reintroduction of Guam-Hong Kong service," said Matt Miller, Managing Director of Asia-Pacific for Continental Airlines. "I am confident that the new non-stop service will provide customers in Guam with convenient access to Hong Kong while also ensuring that our customers in Hong Kong have great access to Guam, our beautiful hometown island. Our sales and marketing team in Hong Kong remains committed to working closely with our travel trade partners there to introduce Guam to more of the general flying public in Hong Kong."

David Kendell, Continental's Director of Sales and Marketing for Micronesia and Asia said, "I would like to take this opportunity to thank Congresswoman Bordallo and Governors Camacho and Fitial for their work with Washington to make this non-stop service possible for us. Our customers have been asking for this popular service for a long time and we are delighted to be returning."

Continental Airlines is the world's fifth largest airline. For more company information, go to continental.com. ***(PR)***

Obama tells banks: 'We want our money back'

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama told banks Thursday they should pay a new tax to recoup the cost of bailing out foundering firms at the height of the financial crisis. "We want our money back," he said.

Obama

In a brief appearance with advisers at the White House, Obama branded the latest round of bank bonuses as "obscene." But he said his goal was to prevent such excesses in the future, not to punish banks for past behavior.

The tax, which would require congressional approval, would last at least 10 years and generate about $90 billion over the decade, according to administration estimates. "If these companies are in good enough shape to afford massive bonuses, they are surely in good enough shape to afford paying back every penny to taxpayers," Obama said.

Advisers believe the administration can make an argument that banks should tap their bonus pools for the fee instead of passing the cost on to consumers.

The president's tone was emphatic and populist, capitalizing on public antipathy toward Wall Street. With the sharp words, he also tried to deflect some of the growing skepticism aimed at his own economic policies as unemployment stubbornly hovers around 10 percent.

The proposed 0.15 percent tax on the liabilities of large financial institutions would apply only to those companies with assets of more than $50 billion—a group estimated at about 50. Administration officials estimate that 60 percent of the revenue would come from the 10 biggest ones.

They would have to pay up even though many did not accept any taxpayer assistance and most that did have repaid the infusions.

Obama said big banks had acted irresponsibility, taken reckless risk for short-term profits and plunged into a crisis of their own making. He cast the struggle ahead as one between the finance industry and average people.

Nation

ACROSS THE NATION

Ill. terrorism suspects indicted in Mumbai attack

CHICAGO (AP)—Two Chicago men were indicted Thursday on charges they planned a violent attack on a Danish newspaper and helped to lay the groundwork for the November 2008 terrorist rampage that killed 166 people in the Indian city of Mumbai. David Coleman Headley and businessman Tahawwur Hussain Rana were named in a 12-count superseding indictment that for the first time alleged Rana was in on the planning of the attacks by a team of 10 terrorists. Headley, 49, an American citizen, and Rana, 49, a Canadian national who has been in business in Chicago for more than a dozen years, are both in federal custody in Chicago. Headley's attorney, John Theis, had no comment Thursday on the new indictment. A message was left for Rana's attorney, Patrick Blegan.

Fla. deputy dies in shootout with killing suspect

CROSS CITY, Fla. (AP)—A Florida sheriff says one of his deputies was killed in a shootout with a man suspected of killing two people and wounding two others. Dixie County Sheriff Dewey Hatcher says 33-year-old Capt. Chad Reed died at a hospital Thursday. Hernando County Sheriff's Office spokeswoman Donna Black says the suspect is 55-year-old John Kalisz. The Gainesville Sun reports Kalisz also is in the hospital but his condition is not known. Black says Kalisz killed two elderly women in a home in Brooksville about 40 miles north of Tampa. She says he also shot two younger women.

3rd teen charged in Texas mother's slaying

HOUSTON (AP)—A third teenager has been charged in the stabbing death of a woman Houston police say was killed in a plot arranged by her son. Police say 17-year-old Kevin Andrew Haney faces a tampering with evidence charge in the November death of 43-year-old Tabassum Khan. Haney is accused of destroying evidence taken from Khan's apartment and relaying money to the teen alleged to have stabbed the woman. He's jailed on an unrelated aggravated robbery charge. Khan's 17-year-old son, Danish Minhas (Dah-NISH' MIN'-hahs), is charged with capital murder. Police say he hired 18-year-old Nur J. Mohamed to kill his mother because she was too controlling. Mohamed also is charged with capital murder.

AP source: US calls for more security for flights

WASHINGTON (AP)—All airlines flying to the United States or within the country were told Thursday to prepare for even tighter security because of the al-Qaida threat from Yemen, a law enforcement official said.

The U.S. increased the number of air marshals on international flights and pressed for more random screening at airports as intelligence officials warned that al-Qaida's branch in Yemen was continuing to plot attacks on the United States.

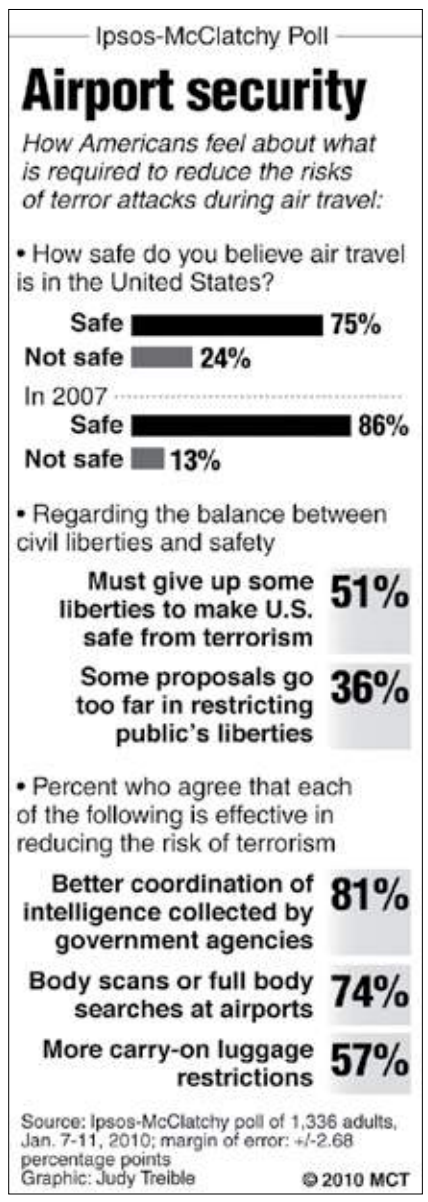
A U.S. counterterrorism official said American intelligence agencies were intensely examining all information about threats from the Yemen-based al-Qaida in the Arab Peninsula, including potential plots and specific individuals. Counterterrorism agencies have serious concerns about al-Qaida plots emanating from Yemen, the official said.

The officials did not pinpoint any specific evidence of new plots since the Christmas Day bombing attempt by a Nigerian national on a Detroit-bound flight. Both spoke on condition of anonymity because they were not authorized to discuss intelligence publicly.

Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano said in a statement that travelers should allow for extra time, especially if flying into the U.S. from overseas, as officials stepped up security. "We are facing a determined enemy and we appreciate the patience of all Americans and visitors to our country, and the cooperation of our international partners as well as a committed airline industry," she said.

President Barack Obama was briefed Thursday by his national security team on progress against al-Qaida and its affiliates.

Al-Qaida's Yemeni offshoot has long aimed at U.S. targets. Yemeni terrorists almost sunk the USS Cole in 2000 with an explosion that killed 17 sailors. The U.S. Embassy there has closed several times over past threats.


Ipsos-McClatchy Poll
Airport security
How Americans feel about what is required to reduce the risks of terror attacks during air travel:
• How safe do you believe air travel is in the United States?
Safe 75%
Not safe 24%
In 2007
Safe 86%
Not safe 13%
• Regarding the balance between civil liberties and safety
Must give up some liberties to make U.S. safe from terrorism 51%
Some proposals go too far in restricting public's liberties 36%
• Percent who agree that each of the following is effective in reducing the risk of terrorism
Better coordination of intelligence collected by government agencies 81%
Body scans or full body searches at airports 74%
More carry-on luggage restrictions 57%
Source: Ipsos-McClatchy poll of 1,336 adults, Jan. 7-11, 2010; margin of error: +/-2.68 percentage points
Graphic: Judy Treible
© 2010 MCT

Hundreds of names have been added to the terrorist watch list since Dec. 25, when a 23-year-old Nigerian man boarded a flight without a coat or checked bag from Amsterdam to Detroit. Bombing suspect Umar Farouk Abdulmutallab, who is alleged to have hidden an explosive in his underwear, was not on a watch list that would have called for extra screening before he boarded the U.S.-bound plane.

The administration has already added hundreds of air marshals to the existing force of more than 4,000. Napolitano said the air marshals would be assigned to flights on certain routes. There were no air marshals on Northwest Flight 253 on Christmas or on the same flight the following day.

The additional security measures Napolitano described Thursday are similar to what the administration asked of airlines since Christmas. Security directives for international travel are sent to airlines because the U.S. does not have the authority to regulate how foreign airports secure commercial air travel.

Spokespersons for several major U.S. airlines, including Delta, AirTran, US Airways and American, said there was nothing new on the security front that they could share publicly.

On its Web site, Delta was advising passengers to arrive for international flights at least three hours before departure. American was advising passengers to get to airports two to three hours early for international flights, depending on origin and destination.

U.S. airlines have not handled security screening at domestic airports since the aftermath of the Sept. 11 attacks, when the TSA was created to take over that task. At some airports overseas, however, airlines have been known to hire private security firms to help guard passengers, cargo and aircraft. That has been the case at times at Jomo Kenyatta International Airport in Kenya.

Tentative tax deal marks health care breakthrough

WASHINGTON (AP)—In a major breakthrough, union leaders bowed Thursday to White House demands for a new tax on high-cost insurance plans as part of landmark health care legislation taking final shape in intensive negotiations. "We are on the doorstep" of success, President Barack Obama said.

The tentative agreement on the tax, which included significant concessions by the administration, was disclosed as leading lawmakers set an informal timetable of Friday for a compromise on the health care bill that Obama made a top priority in taking office a year ago.

Democrats expressed the hope that the agreement would quickly open the way for progress on other key issues where House and Senate-passed bills differ, as well as attempts by the White House to squeeze additional financial concessions from drug makers, nursing homes and other health care providers.

On a separate issue, makers of generic drugs, backed by the White House and a senior congressional ally, sought to reduce the patent protection that pharmaceutical companies receive for their new-to-market biotech products. The House and Senate bills both limit competition for 12 years, but Obama told Democrats he wanted changes.

The fast-paced events came as senior lawmakers spent parts of a second consecutive day at the White House for bargaining over terms of a final compromise, and Obama gave a rousing speech to rank and file House Democrats in a late-afternoon appearance in the Capitol complex.

Referring to polls that show lagging support for the legislation, he told Democrats, "I know how big a lift this has been."

US takes charge in Haiti—with troops, rescue aid

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Barack Obama and the U.S. moved to take charge in earthquake-ravaged Haiti on Thursday, dispatching thousands of troops along with tons of aid to try to keep order as well as rescue the suffering in a country dysfunctional in the best of times.

Tested by the first large-scale humanitarian disaster of his presidency, Obama ordered a relief effort of historic proportions despite the strains it was sure to put on both the stretched U.S. budget and military forces fighting two wars. He pledged an initial $100 million—with the likelihood of more later.

"The United States is providing a lot of the glue that is keeping people communicating and working together as we try to assert authority, reinstate the government and begin to do what governments have to do to rebuild," Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton said on Fox News Channel.

Aware of the steep political cost George W. Bush paid for an ineffective response to Hurricane Katrina, the White House has labored to show intensive engagement by Obama since immediately after the 7.0-magnitude quake late Tuesday afternoon. Details of evening Situation Room meetings, phone calls with world leaders and canceled events were being released almost hourly.

"I will not put up with any excuses for us not doing the very best in this time of tragedy," Obama pledged at the Capitol, making his third public comments on the topic in two days.

The president announced "the first waves" of the American response were in place, with two search-and-rescue teams on the ground, Coast Guard cutters in port, the U.S. Southern Command in control of the airport and airlifts bringing in urgently needed supplies and ferrying out the injured.

Trinkets in trash after cadmium warning

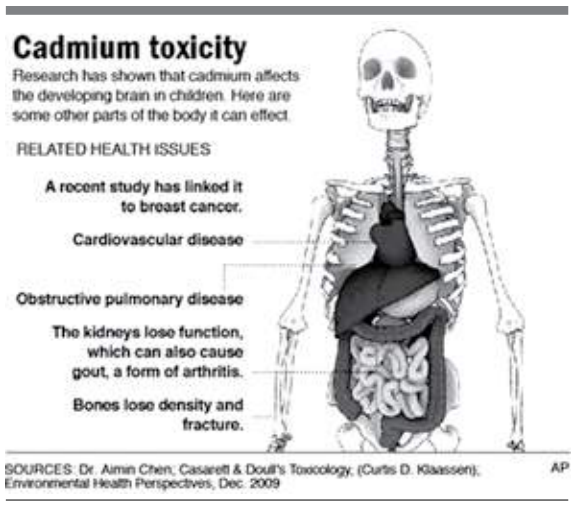
By JOCELYN NOVECK
AP NATIONAL WRITER

Kathy Sanders waited until her 4-year-old daughter, Emma, was distracted with a video game Thursday. Then she made her move.

With the excuse that she needed to collect the laundry, Sanders sneaked upstairs and scooped up the jewelry that came with the Disney princess dressup set Emma had gotten for Christmas. Then she tossed it in the trash.

There have been lead scares, baby bottle scares and Christmas toy scares. And now, Sanders and other parents have something else to worry about: cadmium, which the nation's product-safety chief warned this week could be present in cheap jewelry.

The warning came after The Associated Press reported that tests had showed high levels of cadmium in children's jewelry imported from China. Like lead, cadmium can hinder brain development in children and even cause cancer, according to recent research.


Cadmium toxicity
Research has shown that cadmium affects the developing brain in children. Here are some other parts of the body it can effect.
RELATED HEALTH ISSUES
A recent study has linked it to breast cancer.
Cardiovascular disease
Obstructive pulmonary disease
The kidneys lose function, which can also cause gout, a form of arthritis.
Bones lose density and fracture.
SOURCES: Dr. Aimin Chen; Casarett & Doull's Toxicology, (Curtis D. Klaassen); Environmental Health Perspectives, Dec. 2009
AP

It wasn't clear if Emma's new trinkets were dangerous, but Sanders, of Corfu, N.Y., wasn't taking any chances. And she wasn't alone.

In Chicago, Jennifer Seaver was planning to throw away all the cheap jewelry her 7-year-old, Julia, had amassed from goodie bags or gifts.

"I'm definitely only going to let her wear jewelry that's gold or silver, that I buy her," said Seaver, 38, who was shopping on Michigan Avenue. "I figure it's an easy thing to avoid," she said of the cadmium. "Those are all cheap things that can easily be thrown away."

Seaver said she felt relatively calm about the warning from the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission's chairman, Inez Tenenbaum—perhaps because there had been so many scares in recent years. "Maybe because it happens so frequently, it makes me immune," she said.

Others were angrier.

"When is America going to learn?" asked Theresa Savoie, a 53-year-old grandmother strolling through a mall in Gretna, La., with her 16-month-old grandson. "Everything you buy says `Made in China,' and every time you turn around there's another government warning."

Many were concerned about the lack of specifics in the government's guidance.

Asia

Taiwan, Tibet, and trade loom over U.S.-China ties

BEIJING (AP)—Barely two weeks into the new year, U.S.-China relations are being roiled by old tensions over Taiwan, Tibet and trade, along with new irritations including Google's charges it had been hacked and Pentagon concerns over the People's Liberation Army's massive buildup.

The new friction in what is emerging as the world's most crucial bilateral relationship poses a key test of the depth and resiliency of those ties, along with the pragmatism of their leaders and recognition of their mutual interdependence.

For now, soothing the raw atmosphere surrounding ties may be the two sides' most pressing task.

Allegations this week from Internet giant Google Inc. of hacking from inside China prompted U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton to say she had "very serious concerns and questions." Google itself said it will stop censoring its search results in China and may pull out of the country completely—an indication that China's massive market may not be the irresistible draw that it has been.

The sharper tone also was underscored by unusually frank comments from the commander of American forces in the Pacific, who characterized China's massive military buildup as aggressive and aimed at limiting American freedom of movement in the region.

"That there are 'bumps in the road' not far ahead is self-evident," said business consultant Robert Kapp, who headed the U.S.-China Business Council from 1994 through 2004.

"We can't know whether, on each issue, the two sides, in a reasonable amount of time, will be able to find common ground, and what the ramifications of failure are," Kapp said.

Taliban chief believed alive after US missiles hit

ISLAMABAD (AP)—The leader of the Pakistani Taliban was apparently targeted in a U.S. missile strike on a meeting of militant commanders close to the Afghan border Thursday, but he escaped unhurt, Pakistani officials and militants said. Twelve insurgents were believed killed.

The death of Hakimullah Mehsud would be a major victory for both for Washington and Islamabad in their fight against Islamist militants. Mehsud appeared on a video released last week sitting next to the Jordanian militant who killed seven CIA employees in a suicide attack in December in Afghanistan.

Mehsud's Tehrik-e-Taliban movement, which is linked to al-Qaida and the Taliban across the border in Afghanistan, has also claimed responsibility for scores of bloody suicide bombings in Pakistan in recent months against military, civilian and government targets.

The U.S. missile strike was the eighth such attack in two weeks in Pakistan's North Waziristan tribal region, an unprecedented volley of drone attacks since the CIA-led program began in earnest two years ago. The surge signals the Obama administration's reliance on the tactic despite official protest from Islamabad.

Malaysia minorities fear Islamization in Allah row

KUALA LUMPUR, Malaysia (AP)—A dispute over the use of the word "Allah" by Christians in Malaysia is the latest sign of growing hardline Islamic influence in what has been a relatively moderate Muslim-majority country.

The dispute has spawned attacks on 10 churches and has hardened a long-standing sense of alienation among the non-Muslim minority, threatening 40 years of ethnic peace and stability that underpins Malaysia's economic success.

Tensions rose further Thursday after lawyers representing Christians in their legal fight for the right to use "Allah" discovered their office had been ransacked and a laptop was missing. Also Thursday, a church in the southern state of Johor was found to have been vandalized with red paint.

"We are continually treated as second-class citizens," said Benjamin Poh, a 47-year-old executive who is ethnic Chinese. He added that he is saving money so his son, now 10, can attend university overseas to escape discrimination at home.

The church attacks over the past week—most were firebombed—followed a Dec. 31 court decision overturning a government order that forbade a Catholic newspaper from using the word "Allah" as a translation for God in its Malay-language edition.

ASIAN BRIEFS

Suicide bomber kills 20 people in Afghanistan

KABUL (AP)—A suicide bomber killed 20 people—including three children—Thursday in a market in central Afghanistan in the deadliest attack against Afghan civilians in more than three months. Suicide bombings and other attacks have become the No. 1 killer of Afghan civilians in the intensifying war between U.S.-led forces and the Taliban. A United Nations report released this week found that the number of Afghan civilians killed in war-related violence rose last year to its highest level of the 8-year-old war—with nearly 70 percent of the deaths blamed on the Taliban and their allies. Attacks against purely civilian targets are less common in Afghanistan than in Iraq, where most of the violence is between rival Islamic religious communities. The U.N. report said most of the 2,412 Afghan civilians killed last year were caught up in fighting between militants and NATO troops.

SKoreans named world texting champs

NEW YORK (AP)—Two South Korean teenagers have been crowned fastest texters in the world. The team of 17-year-old Bae Yeong Ho and 18-year-old Ha Mok Min went thumb-to-thumb against competitors from a dozen countries to win the title in a competition Thursday in New York City. The LG Mobile World Cup challenged nimble-fingered youths on both speed and accuracy. The winning team took home a $100,000 prize.

NZ police inquire into attack on dolphin

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—Police in New Zealand are investigating reports that a boisterous teenage dolphin with a reputation for stealing surfboards and balls from swimmers was attacked with a paddle after annoying a canoeist. Named Moko, the solo bottlenose dolphin has spent the past three years swimming with people on North Island's east coast, pushing them out to sea on surfboards, even leaving one woman stranded on a sea buoy when he stole her surfboard.

He's also overturned kayaks, tipped over water skiers and even interfered with surf lifeguard training.

World

Haiti quake aid snarled; up to 50,000 feared dead

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Doctors and search dogs, troops and rescue teams flew to this devastated land of dazed, dead and dying people Thursday, finding bottlenecks everywhere, beginning at a main airport short on jet fuel and ramp space and without a control tower.

The international Red Cross estimated 45,000 to 50,000 people were killed in Tuesday's cataclysmic earthquake, based on information from the Haitian Red Cross and government officials. Worries mounted, meanwhile, about food and water for the survivors.

"People have been almost fighting for water," aid worker Fevil Dubien said as he distributed water from a truck in a northern Port-au-Prince neighborhood.

From Virginia, from China, a handful of rescue teams were able to get down to work, scouring the rubble for survivors. In one "small miracle," searchers pulled a security guard alive from beneath the collapsed concrete floors of the U.N. peacekeeping headquarters, where many others were entombed.

Sifting through the wreckage

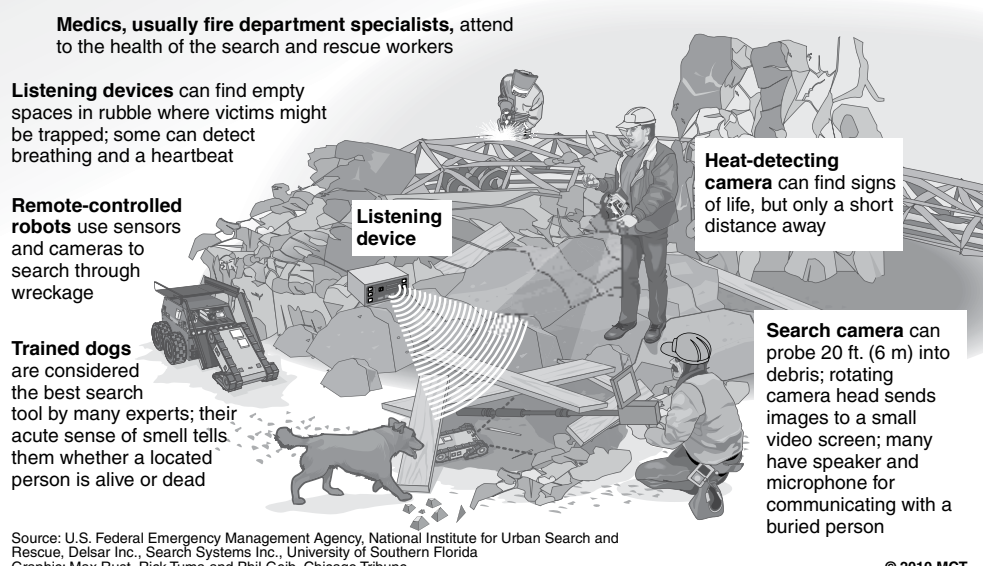
Search-and-rescue teams from the U.S are working to find victims in collapsed buildings in Haiti. Here's how they do their work:

1 Teams set up a search grid, and each team is assigned a sector

2 Structural engineers assess damage to determine whether rubble is stable enough to search

3 Search teams scour the debris for signs of survivors; communications workers send messages between teams by mobile phone, walkie-talkie and the Internet

4 Rescue team steps in when a survivor is found and digs through rubble to free the person; the medical assistance team then goes to work


Medics, usually fire department specialists, attend to the health of the search and rescue workers
Listening devices can find empty spaces in rubble where victims might be trapped; some can detect breathing and a heartbeat
Remote-controlled robots use sensors and cameras to search through wreckage
Trained dogs are considered the best search tool by many experts; their acute sense of smell tells them whether a located person is alive or dead
Listening device
Heat-detecting camera can find signs of life, but only a short distance away
Search camera can probe 20 ft. (6 m) into debris; rotating camera head sends images to a small video screen; many have speaker and microphone for communicating with a buried person

Source: U.S. Federal Emergency Management Agency, National Institute for Urban Search and Rescue, Delsar Inc., Search Systems Inc., University of Southern Florida
Graphic: Max Rust, Rick Tuma and Phil Geib, Chicago Tribune

© 2010 MCT

Haitian families struggle to find, bury their dead

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP)—Some of the dead in this shattered city line the roads, carefully placed garments shrouding their faces. Others are carried into the hills for quick burials. Hundreds are arrayed in a macabre tangle of limbs outside a morgue, just feet from the grievously wounded.

The living and the dead here share the same space—the sidewalks, the public plazas, the hospitals. The living are frightened of being inside in case another earthquake hits; the dead are everywhere.

On the doorstep of a pharmacy, six bodies were lined up shoulder to shoulder. On the body of one woman, covered in a sheet, rested a small bundle, the tiny leg of an infant sticking out of the wrap.

"It's beyond description. The disaster, the damage, is just so overwhelming," said Karel Zelenka, a Catholic Relief Services representative in Haiti. "Everyone has a scarf or something, because the smell is unbearable. ... You literally have bodies all over the place."

The international Red Cross estimates up to 50,000 people were killed in Tuesday's earthquake.

WORLD BRIEFS

Attack in Jordan targets Israeli Embassy convoy

NAOUR, Jordan (AP)—A roadside bomb exploded Thursday near a convoy of Israeli diplomats traveling through Jordan on their way home for the weekend, but no one was hurt, officials in both countries said. Ambassador Daniel Nevo was not in the convoy, Israeli officials in Jerusalem said. There was no immediate claim of responsibility. It was the first time a roadside bomb was used in an attack in Jordan, where suicide bombings and shootings have targeted foreigners in recent years. The method is widespread in neighboring Iraq.

Iraq's electoral commission bars 500 candidates

BAGHDAD (AP)—Iraq's electoral commission on Thursday barred 500 candidates from running in March's parliamentary election, including a prominent Sunni lawmaker, in a decision that is sure to deepen Iraq's sectarian divides. Hamdia al-Hussaini, a commissioner on the Independent High Electoral Commission, said the commission made the decision after receiving the list from a parliament committee that vets candidates for ties to Saddam Hussein's outlawed Baath party. The decision to bar the candidates—most of whom are believed to be Sunni—potentially threatens the country's fragile security because it risks leaving Sunni voters feeling targeted and disenfranchised. The Sunni boycott in a January 2005 election is considered one of the key factors that deepened the insurgency.

Maharlika
PINOY LIFE IN THE MARIANAS
Saturday, January 16, 2010

FILIPINO RESCUED from collapsed Haiti building

By KATHERINE EVANGELISTA, CYNTHIA BALANA
INQUIRER.NET, PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—One of the four missing members of the Philippine delegation to the United Nations in earthquake-hit Haiti has been rescued, a spokesman of the Armed Forces of the Philippines said Thursday.

In an interview, Lieutenant Colonel Romeo Brawner Jr., Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesman, said that at 11:30 a.m. (Manila time), the military received a report that Corporal David Catacutan was rescued by members of the Philippine contingent at the Montana Hotel.

Brawner said that based on initial medical examination, Catacutan sustained bruises but was now recovering at the headquarters of the Philippine peacekeeping mission in Haiti.

Brawner said that the family "has been informed about the rescue last night."

He added that families of three others still missing were also informed and that "we remained hopeful that we will be able to rescue the three others believed trapped on the second floor of the Christopher building."

Data Processing Technician 3rd Class Perlie Panangue of the Philippine Navy, Sergeant Janice Arocena of the Philippine Air Force, and Sergeant Eustacio Bermudes, Jr. of the Philippine Army worked as clerks at the UN offices on the second floor of the Christopher Hotel, Brawner said.

"We believe that they were on overtime, they were doing overtime because the earthquake happened after 5 p.m. when most of the United Nations workers in that building already left for their barracks or for their respective homes," Brawner said.

Elmer Cato, first secretary of the Philippine Permanent Mission to the UN in New York, confirmed to the Philippine Daily Inquirer in an interview Thursday that "four peacekeepers were trapped."

"The reports we received only said that they are trapped and the areas where they are trapped. We would like to believe that they are alive and just waiting to be reached by rescuers," Cato said.

The Philippines told the UN Thursday that it accounted for all Filipino peacekeepers serving in Haiti but that four remained trapped inside the UN headquarters that collapsed following the massive tremor that hit Port-au-Prince on Tuesday.

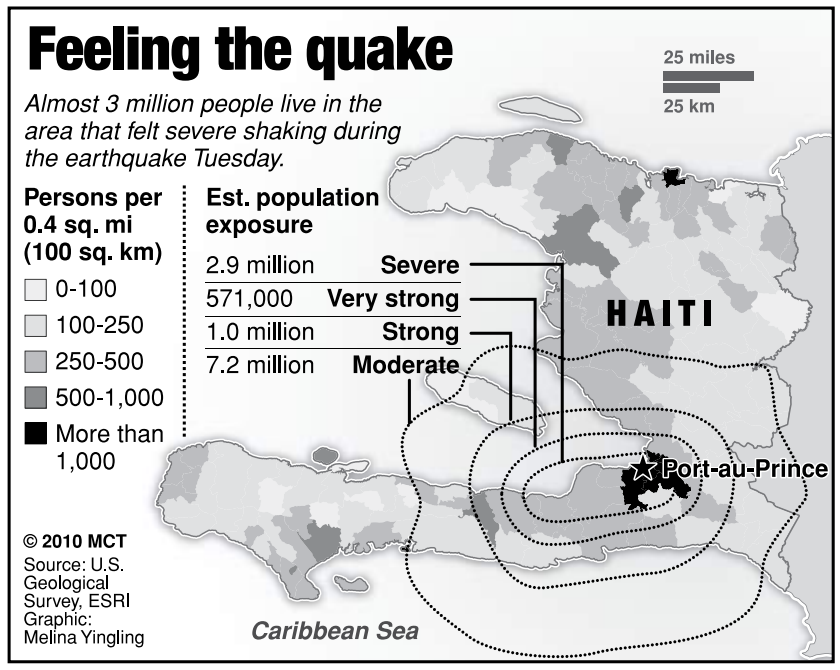
The Philippine Mission to the United Nations said that Ambassador Hilario G. Davide Jr., Permanent Representative to the United Nations, also met with Secretary General Ban Ki-moon and expressed the Philippine government's condolences over the tragedy that left a number of UN staff still missing.

The Philippine Mission said that Ambassador Davide also later met and condoled with the Ambassador Leo Merores, Permanent Representative of Haiti to the United Nations.

In its report to Foreign Affairs Secretary Alberto G. Romulo, the Philippine Mission said Davide requested the floor during a briefing by UN Undersecretary General for Peacekeeping Allan Le Roy to report that all 157 military officers and enlisted men and 15 police officers serving with the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti (Minustah) are all accounted for.

Davide said the number included the three members of the 10th Philippine Peacekeeping Contingent who remain trapped inside the collapsed Minustah headquarters and another in nearby Hotel Montana, which was also being used by the UN.

He said one peacekeeper sustained injuries during the earthquake but was in stable condition at the Argentinian Hospital.



Davide said the Filipino peacekeepers, tasked to provide security and support services to Minustah headquarters, were working with peacekeepers from other member-states in the recovery effort and in securing the area.

He added that the headquarters of the Philippine contingent at the Italian House across the street presently serves as the casualty collection point for victims recovered from the rubble of the former Christopher Hotel.

Davide also shared the concern raised by other UN member states over their inability to get in touch with their peacekeeping contingents in Port-au-Prince immediately following the earthquake.

He said the Philippine Mission could still not reach Lieutenant Colonel Lope Dagoy, more than 24 hours after the earthquake rocked the Haitian capital.

In his intervention, Ambassador Davide also expressed concern over the fate of an undetermined number of UN staff members from the Philippines, some of who were believed to be inside the Minustah headquarters when it collapsed.

The UN said there was around 100 staff inside the building when the earthquake struck.

Among those still unaccounted for are Tunisian diplomat Hedi Hannabi, Special Representative of the Secretary General and head of Minustah, and one of his two deputies, Luiz Carlos da Costa of Brazil.

Davide said there was also no way to check the condition of the almost 500 members of the Filipino community in Haiti, who are missionaries or employed in the garments, power and telecommunications sector.

Ambassador Davide also said that he was informed by the Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations that the Apostolic Nuncio in Haiti, Monsignor Bernardito Auza of Bohol, who was previously assigned in New York, was safe.

RP *soldier used cell phone to guide his rescuers*

By JOCELYN UY
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—A Filipino soldier used his cell phone to lead searchers to his rescue in the basement of a collapsed hotel. But three of his comrades remained trapped in the UN building toppled by Tuesday's powerful quake in Haiti, the military said Thursday.

In a phone call to the Philippines, the head of the Filipino contingent to Haiti, Lt. Col. Lope Dagoy, said Cpl. David Catacutan was rescued by his troops from the wreckage of Hotel Montana before noon Thursday.

Catacutan suffered bruises and was recuperating in the barracks of the Philippine contingent in the Italian House on Rue Theodule, according to Dagoy.

He was escorting a UN VIP who went to the hotel gym for a workout when the fierce quake occurred, said Lt. Col. Romeo Brawner Jr., spokesperson of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

Troops were able to locate Catacutan in the rubble of the hotel following a text message from him stating he was in the hotel gym in the basement, Brawner said.

The Department of Foreign Affairs said elements of the Philippine contingent were now involved in search and assistance operations for Filipinos caught in the disaster.

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos said there were 290 Filipino workers in Haiti, not 447 as earlier reported. He also said that one soldier was injured, Sgt. Bonifacio T. Pait of Tabuk, Kalinga, but had no immediate information on the other Filipinos.

Apostolic Nuncio safe

Philippine Ambassador Hilario Davide Jr. reported from the UN headquarters in New York that the Filipino Apostolic Nuncio in Haiti, Msgr. Barnardito Auza of Bohol, was safe.

The Philippine National Police said that 15 PNP personnel who were part of the Filipino contingent in Haiti were unscathed.

Brawner told reporters that Dagoy made a second phone call to the AFP Peacekeeping Operations Center at Camp O'Donnell in Capas, Tarlac, at about 11:30 a.m. Thursday.

He made the first call to the headquarters at 8 p.m. Wednesday to report that four members of the Philippine peacekeeping force were still missing.

3 unaccounted

Three hours after the earthquake, he phoned his wife to say some of his men were trapped in some of the buildings in the capital, Port-au-Prince.

The three others were still inside Christopher Hotel, which served as the UN headquarters, together with Hedi Annabi, head of the UN Stabilization Mission in Haiti, according to Brawner.

He identified the three as Police Officer 3 Perlie Panangui, Sgt. Janice Arocena and Sgt. Eustacio Bermudez. They were all working as clerks in the various UN offices on the second floor of Christopher Hotel.

"They might have been working overtime because it was past 5 p.m. when the quake happened. Most of the UN workers in that building had already left for their barracks or for their respective homes," Brawner said.

Annabi, who was on the 4th floor of the hotel reportedly meeting with the Chinese ambassador, was among the 16 UN personnel confirmed dead in the earthquake that reduced impoverished Haiti to shambles.

Families informed

"The families of the three soldiers were informed that they were still unaccounted for but we are hopeful that they will be rescued by our troops there," Brawner said.

Catacutan's family was also immediately informed of his rescue, he added.

Brawner said he expected to hear more from Dagoy.

"There is no electricity there so Colonel Dagoy is trying to save the battery life of the satellite phone ... the arrangement is that he will call us when there is a definite development," he said.

In Ilagan, Isabela, Irene de Guzman, a school teacher, said she was concerned after she had not heard from her 56-year-old husband Remegio, a transport supervisor for the UN Development Programme.

De Guzman said she talked to Remegio just before the quake struck. With reports from Cynthia D. Balana and Villamor Visaya Jr., Inquirer Northern Luzon

Andal Ampatuan Jr. fired first, says witness

By CATHY C. YAMSUAN, MARLON RAMOS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—"They begged for their lives … [but] they made sure no one would survive."

Using high-powered guns, Datu Unsay Mayor Andal Ampatuan Jr. and his uncle shot dead Genalin Mangudadatu and two companions, summoned other members of the convoy and again fired on the three corpses in their presence.

This was part of the account of Ampatuan Vice Mayor Rasul Sangki, who testified on Wednesday that before they were killed, the wife of Buluan Vice Mayor Esmael "Toto" Mangudadatu and her sister-in-law Bai Eden begged for their lives, and journalist Jimmy Pal'ak—who hosted a number of shows during town celebrations—repeatedly reminded Ampatuan Jr. that they knew each other.

In his testimony delivered in Filipino before Quezon City Judge Jocelyn Solis-Reyes, Sangki said Ampatuan and his men eventually "finished off" the rest of the Mangudadatu convoy.

"They aimed at the heads. They made sure no one would survive," he said.

Andal Ampatuan Jr. is the primary suspect in the Nov. 23 massacre of 57 people, including at least 30 journalists, in Maguindanao. He is facing 41 counts of murder so far.

Sangki was the first witness to testify at Wednesday's hearing held in a converted courtroom at the Noncommissioned Officers Club of the Philippine National Police in Camp Crame. He was the second witness presented by the prosecution at the hearing on Ampatuan's bail petition.

AP

Suspect Andal Ampatuan Jr. is handcuffed by an agent of the National Bureau of Investigation before leaving the detention compound for a court Manila, Philippines, Wednesday, Jan. 13, 2010.

Ambush

The burly Sangki arrived at the courtroom looking pale and anxious and escorted by plainclothesmen from the Witness Protection Program.

He said he knew of the plan to ambush members of the Mangudadatu convoy three days before it happened because Ampatuan himself told him about it by phone.

"A-ambushin natin" was how Ampatuan described it, Sangki said during questioning by State Prosecutor Leo Dacera.

Sangki said that on Nov. 19, he was in Manila when he first received a call from the mayor seeking clearance to deploy some of his men in Ampatuan town.

He said Ampatuan merely said Mangudadatu family members would pass the area.

Sangki said that on Nov. 20, he returned to Maguindanao and was summoned by the mayor.

Prosecutor Dacera asked him why he went despite being tired from his return trip.

Sangki paused at length before replying that in their province of Maguindanao, Ampatuan was known to get upset when he did not have his way.

"If I do not oblige, I fear that something might happen to me or my family," Sangki said.

'Sangoku'

This was how Sangki recounted the turn of events:

On Nov. 23, Sangki was at the Ampatuan municipal hall early to meet with members of the Sangguniang Bayan. He got another call from Ampatuan, who ordered him to proceed to Crossing Saniag.

Sangki complied, and saw Ampatuan and his men armed with M-60s, M-16s, M-14s, AK-47s, M-203s and a bazooka.

He also saw many vehicles, including a "sangoku," a custom-made camouflage-painted truck that carried "two .50 cal and two .30 cal [firearms]."

At this point, an argument erupted between Dacera and defense lawyer Sigfrid Fortun, who objected when the prosecutor flashed a photo of what appeared to be a sangoku on a projector screen.

"We cannot say this is exactly the same as the one seen in Crossing Saniag. A sangoku contains firearms. For the record, I don't see any firearm. I don't see even the barrel of a firearm, just a square hole," Fortun complained, eliciting laughter from the courtroom audience.

Sangki said Ampatuan carried an Icom radio unit through which he appeared to be monitoring the movements of the Mangudadatu convoy.

He said the man on the radio giving updates to Ampatuan was Chief Insp. Sukarno Dicay.

'I got scared'

This was how Sangki continued his testimony:

Sangki said he heard Dicay report that the convoy had passed the Tacurong rotunda.

When Dicay told Ampatuan that the convoy had made it past the Isulan rotunda, the latter told his men: "Alert kayo!"

Ampatuan ordered that the convoy be allowed to get near enough to be blocked by the sangoku.

"I got scared. If the Mangudadatus were armed, there might be a firefight," Sangki told the court.

Sangki then overheard Dicay tell Ampatuan that the convoy was being led by a Pajero-type vehicle and that a media vehicle with the marking UNTV was bringing up the rear.

He was about two to three arms' length away from Ampatuan when Dicay reported on the radio that the convoy had reached Crossing Saniag and had been blocked.

Ampatuan then ordered his men in the area to look for the certificate of candidacy of Toto Mangudadatu, who planned to run for governor of Maguindanao.

Police cars

Sangki said he rode one of two Toyota Hilux police cars that were among the vehicles used by Ampatuan's men to get to Sitio Malating, where the Mangudadatu convoy was held.

In Malating, Sangki said he saw Dicay aiming his firearm at Mangudadatu family members and other people lying on the ground.

This was how he narrated the succeeding events:

Ampatuan, followed by his men, alighted from his vehicle and started pulling at the hair of those on the ground, apparently looking for someone.

"They started hitting the people. [Ampatuan] gave the order to seize all cell phones, radio equipment and cameras," Sangki said.

At this point, Sangki noticed journalist Pal'ak among those on the ground. Ampatuan's men were hitting him in the back with rifle butts.

Two women were singled out from the rest and taken to a Toyota Revo that prosecutors said was owned by Ampatuan's uncle, Datu Kanor.

Sangki heard two gunshots and saw people being hit, pushed or dragged.

(Previous news reports identified Datu Kanor as the vice mayor of Salibo town who now faces multiple murder charges. Sangki said Datu Kanor was also one of the most trusted men of the clan patriarch Andal Ampatuan Sr.)

'They're here'

At one point, Ampatuan radioed someone saying in Filipino: "Father, they're here."

The man that answered, who Sangki identified as Ampatuan Sr., said: "You know what to do."

The response prompted Sangki to tell Ampatuan that they could perhaps still resolve the matter.

To which Ampatuan replied: "Huwag kang magsalita d'yan, pagod ako! (Shut up! I'm tired!)"

The entire group then proceeded to Sitio Masalay where Sangki and Ampatuan got off.

"I went behind the Hilux and saw two women being pulled out of the Revo and ordered to join the others," Sangki said.

He said he heard Pal'ak tell Ampatuan: "Datu, I'm Jimmy!"

But Ampatuan's men continued to hit Pal'ak, he said.

Pal'ak and the two women were then made to stand together and shot, Sangki said adding that Ampatuan and Datu Kanor "were the ones who fired."

Others at the scene

Ampatuan then ordered the other passengers of the L-300 be brought to him. He again fired at the dead as if to emphasize what had just occurred, Sangki said.

He said the other men he recognized at the scene were Datu Badal Oca, the vice mayor of Sultan Sa Barongis; Datu Mama Ampatuan, who carried an AK-47; one Datu Piro, who was with an M-16; and one Datu Fahd, who had an M-203.

He said the fifth datu that he saw was Datu Bahnarin Ampatuan, who is married to his sister.

Sangki said Ampatuan's men then shot all the victims in the head.

Later, he said, Ampatuan ordered him to go back to Sitio Malating "and tell everyone that they saw nothing."

Credibility

The defense panel attacked Sangki's credibility during the hour-long cross-examination.

At the start, Fortun established Sangki's family ties to the Mangudadatus and the Ampatuans.

He then questioned Sangki's failure to inform the Mangudadatus of Ampatuan's purported ambush plan.

"You did not tell the Mangudadatus of the accused's plan despite your being their relative?" Fortun said.

"I did not," Sangki said.

Fortun also asked Sangki why he did not report the purported plot to the authorities when he had just attended the convention of the ruling Lakas-Kampi-CMD.

"Being the second father of the town, you did nothing to stop the crime. Why did you not inform the authorities or even officials of your party?" Fortun said.

Sangki replied in Filipino: "I don't know who to trust."

PHILIPPINE BRIEFS

4 soldiers hurt in Masbate clash

NAGA CITY—Four soldiers were hurt in a clash between government troops and suspected New People's Army rebels in the island province of Masbate Friday morning, an Army official said. Major Harold Cabunoc, spokesman of the 9th Infantry Division of the Philippine Army based in Camp Elias Angeles in Pili, Camarines Sur, said that at about 7:30 a.m., a squad of soldiers on a pickup truck, while on their way to Masbate City, was ambushed by armed men, suspected to be NPA rebels in Barangay (village) Umabay, Mobo town. The Army immediately sent reinforcement when firefight ensued. Meanwhile, two other encounters between the Army and suspected rebels rocked Sorsogon province also on the same day, Cabunoc added. He said that at about 7:30 a.m., a firefight occurred in Barangay Lapnig in Gubat town between soldiers belonging to the 49th Infantry Battalion. ***(Inquirer Southern Luzon)***

Ex-PBA star convicted for murder in the US back in RP

MANILA, Philippines—Former basketball star Rudy Distrito arrived in Manila Wednesday, shortly after United States authorities ordered his deportation when he was granted parole following his conviction for murder. Distrito, who was known as "The Destroyer" during his 15 years of playing for the Philippine Basketball Association, flew in from Los Angeles on board a Philippine Airlines flight. He arrived at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 2 at around 6 a.m. Escorted by US marshals, he and three other deportees were turned over to Bureau of Immigration officials for deportation proceedings. Distrito was convicted in the murder of Juan Amaya, a 24-year-old Mexican. Distrito stabbed the victim during an argument in their neighborhood in Las Vegas on Nov. 24, 2004. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

SWS: People power looms if election fails

MANILA, Philippines—Another people power revolt could happen should the 2010 national elections fail. This is what almost half of Filipinos believe, according to a survey by Social Weather Stations released Thursday. The nationwide survey, conducted on Oct. 24-27, posed the following scenario to respondents: "If the 2010 elections fail for any reason, e.g., malfunctioning of the counting machines, then people power will probably happen already." Forty-nine percent agreed with the statement, while 22 percent disagreed, resulting in a net agreement score (percentage of those who agree minus percentage of those who disagree) of plus 27 points. ***(Philippine Daily Inquirer)***

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Kris Aquino rages outside home of James' rumored girl

By NANCY C. CARVAJAL, MARINEL CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines — The buzz is on.

Show biz celebrity Kris Aquino confronted a female fan of her husband, basketball star James Yap, shouting insults at the woman and her mother just outside their upscale Pasig City residence late Wednesday, the Inquirer learned Thursday.

The popular TV host and movie actress spent about 10 minutes at the gate of the Valle Verde 2 home of Mayen Austria, 35, according to Austria's uncle, Gabby Lopez (no relation to the ABS-CBN chair).

Lopez said he was at the Austria residence and that the family was entertaining guests—including Legazpi City Bishop Joel Baylon—when Aquino arrived.

Reached on the phone Thursday night, Baylon confirmed he was at the Austria residence when Aquino arrived, but "I only knew about it when Mayen, between sobs, related to us the incident immediately after Kris left."

Baylon said he didn't see the actual encounter since he was inside the house with another guest, a nun based in Spain.

The bishop said Mayen and her mother Minna—whose family had been his friends for more than 20 years—were "obviously distressed" by what happened.

Lopez refused to elaborate on the incident, saying he didn't want to add to the "trauma" suffered by his niece. "All I can say is God sides with who is right and tells the truth," he said in a phone interview.

Pressed for details, Lopez replied: "I don't want to answer that, but I now know who I will not vote for."

Kris is a daughter of the late President Corazon Aquino and youngest sibling of Sen. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, the Liberal Party standard-bearer in the May presidential elections.

Show biz celebrity Kris Aquino and her husband, basketball star James Yap.

Boy Abunda version

But according to TV host and Aquino's best friend Boy Abunda, she was "very cool and polite" during her encounter with Austria, Yap's rumored girlfriend.

It would, therefore, be "unfair" to say that Aquino quarreled with a girl over James.

Abunda explained: "Kris was bothered when she heard James talking on the phone with a girl who was crying. She learned from James that the girl was heartbroken and was confiding in him."

"Kris said that since she was in the neighborhood, she might as well introduce herself to the girl and the girl's family," he said.

Aquino also lives in Valle Verde 2 but has reportedly sold her house and is said to be moving out at the end of the month.

Aquino showed up at the gate of the Austria residence at around 4 p.m. Wednesday, when the family was hosting visitors in their living room, according to another source who declined to be named.

"Mayen went out and saw Aquino, who immediately threw invectives at her," the source said.

Mayen's mother heard the commotion from inside the house and went out to see her daughter already in tears.

"(Aquino) also shouted at her (Minna): Anong klaseng nanay ka? Anong klase ang palaki mo sa anak mo? (What kind of mother are you? What kind of upbringing did you give your child?)" the source said.

Mother and daughter did not answer back, until Aquino left, the source said.

But in Abunda's version of the incident, Aquino first spoke with Austria's mom about what has been going on in her relationship with Yap.

"She said they almost split up in December and that they were separated for weeks. Kris also told [Austria's mom] that she is fighting hard for their marriage. She said she really wanted their marriage to work. In the middle of their conversation, (Mayen) arrived and said there was nothing going on between her and James and that they're just friends," Abunda said.

'Just a basketball fan'

Abunda insisted that Aquino "spoke in a very low voice" during her conversation with the Austrias.

He also said Mayen was not Yap's girlfriend but a fan of his professional basketball team, Purefoods Tender Juicy Giants.

"In all fairness to James, he did not hide from Kris that he was talking with the girl. I think he even used his phone in front of Kris," Abunda stressed.

"I understood why Kris did it. I would've done the same thing. It was unfair to say that Kris quarreled with the girl. She spoke with caution and temperance. It's just that with what's happening between them, she thought that if there was a problem, hindi na n'ya palalakihin pa (she won't blow out it of proportion). She would like to nip it in the bud."

In 2007, Yap was rumored to have had romantic liaisons with Hope Centeno, then a receptionist at the Belo Medical Clinic, which Aquino used to endorse. Yap denied the rumors.

THE DAY AFTER AP

Residents sift through debris a day after a fire razed close to a thousand homes at Manila's district of Paco, in the Philippines, Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010. Authorities said two residents were hurt in the fire, the third to hit the same area in five years.

TAKE CHARGE

Time for a money makeover

Editor's Note: This is part of Take Charge of Your Money, a partnership between INQUIRER.net and Citibank to help readers handle their personal finances well.

Question: This 2010, I hope to be more responsible when it comes to handling money. That's what our church has been reminding us - to be good stewards of the financial resources given to us. I must admit I need a total overhaul in this department. Can you help me please?—Janet

Answer: One of the best things you can do for yourself and your family is indeed to be a good steward of your finances. Being a good steward means being a good manager, and this calls for some goal-setting and devising of strategies.

This may seem like something a professional can do for you. Although you can tap a financial adviser to help you sort out your finances, you can very well do a money makeover by yourself. Just follow our simple tips down below.

1. Visualize your goal.

Plans require a goal, and a financial plan is no exception. Be honest with yourself and identify what goal or goals you want to achieve in the future. Such goals may include getting out of debt, investing in a condominium unit, or establishing a retirement fund. Whatever your goal/s is/are, write it down to help you remember it.

2. Have a money notebook or file.

If you are the pen-and-paper type of person, buy a nice notebook or journal. If you are high tech and prefer to go paperless, start with a spreadsheet on your computer. These files, whether on paper or electronic form, should contain your budget, a record of actual expenses, a list of your payables, and your payment plan for debts.

3. Write down your budget.

Every person desiring to be financially secure should have a working budget which would set down the parameters of one's spending. Based on your income, make provision for savings (at least 10 percent), then allot the rest for your usual expenditure items. Put a spending limit on each expense item. Be guided by your budget throughout the month.

4. List down your expenses.

Write down everything, from candy to big-ticket purchases and bills. By listing down your expenditures, you will be able to compare your spending against your budget. If you are overspending, find out the reason and take steps to curb the habit.

5. Have a monthly spending limit.

Put a monthly spending limit on your purchases. It should be an amount you can afford, taking into account your other budgeted expenses monthly. If you own a credit card, make sure you don't spend more than you can afford to pay. It is good to have a credit card as you will be able to purchase items even if you don't have the cash on hand as of the moment, but use it wisely.

6. If you are heavily in debt, stop spending.

You may do so literally (some have done so) to stop yourself from further burying yourself in debt. Stick to the essentials, and forego luxuries from now, even small things like taking a taxi to work, when there are cheaper means of transportation available.

7. Shop in bulk for items you need regularly.

Great bargains may be had at warehouse clubs or discount stores. If the number of items per bulk purchase is too much for your small household, split the purchase with a family member or friend.

8. Prepare for the future.

Take out health insurance and life insurance, especially if you are the breadwinner of the family. This will protect your family from financial burden if you get sick or when you pass away.

9. Have a "money buddy."

Ask your spouse or best friend to regularly check on your money habits and hold you accountable for your money makeover steps. By having someone check on you, chances are you will be more motivated to meet your goals.

10. Spend less.

It's a simple rule that most people ignore. But it really works if you want to be financially secure. Before buying anything-that goes for literally anything, from grocery items to cars-compare prices. Choose the best quality at the lowest cost. Check the Internet or newspaper advertisements for prices of items you are interested to buy. And when you see a promotion, take advantage of it if it will bring you added benefits. Be a smart shopper.

These are only some money makeover tips you can easily do. Start doing them this week; don't delay. We wish you the best!

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Maharlika – PinoyStyle

Why Juday almost left home network

By MARINEL CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—Actress Judy Ann Santos once thought of leaving ABS-CBN for another network, just like fellow actress Claudine Barretto, who actually signed up to work for rival channel GMA 7 recently.

"It's tough when you have a family to feed. You think more about saving for the future. Just think of all the other projects I could have done in the three years I was working on 'Habang May Buhay,'" Judy Ann told entertainment writers at the press launch of her newest drama series.

But she decided to stick it out with the Kapamilya network because she's no quitter. "I believe in this project. I love my staff. I was never known as someone who would leave a project unfinished," she said.

On the other hand, Claudine did not have an existing contract with ABS-CBN when she decided to transfer to GMA 7, according to Kapamilya channel head Cory Vidanes.

Although she was initially taken aback by news of Claudine's transfer, Judy Ann said, "I understood why she did it."

Claudine was with the Kapamilya network for 16 years.

"We can still work together in the future," Judy Ann said. "It may be a movie project with another production outfit like Regal (Entertainment) or Viva Films. Anything can happen."

Q: Your husband Ryan has a show on GMA 7. What are your thoughts on this?

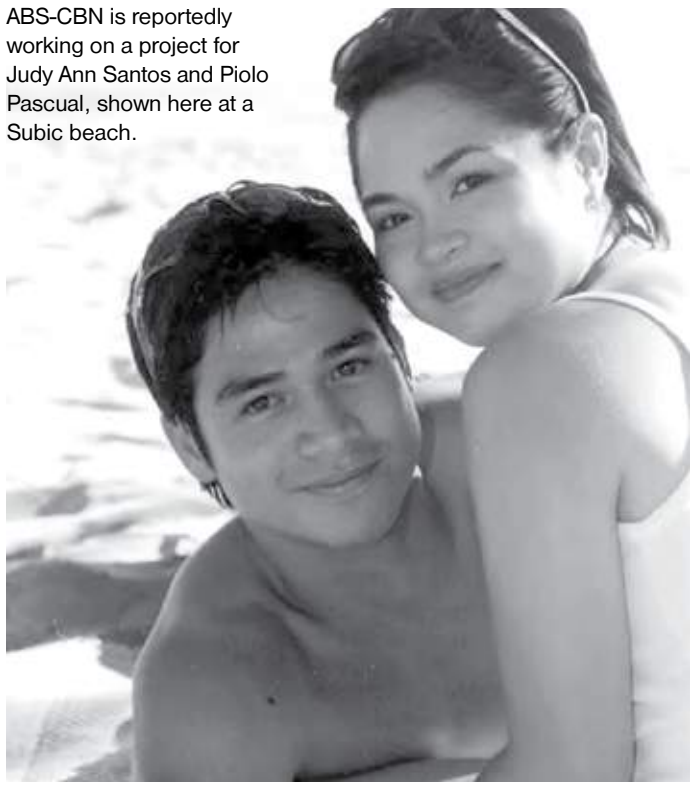
A: When it comes to planning about his career, it's really up to him and his manager Noel Ferrer. Ryan also doesn't meddle when Tito Alfie (Lorenzo) and I plan for future projects. Ryan and I consult each other, but we decide on matters like this independently.

Q: Didn't you also get an offer to move to GMA 7?

A: I'm not sure if there really was a formal offer. If there was, I think that came when I already set my mind on renewing my contract with ABS-CBN. You all know that I've had misunderstandings with the [ABS-CBN] management, nagkatampuhan kami. One thing good about my bosses is that they make the effort to explain their plans to me, to patch things up, to meet me halfway.

Q: What was it like playing opposite Gladys Reyes again?

A: We're currently doing "George and Cecil," but in the new show Gladys plays my kontrabida. This is our answer to numerous requests from fans that we work together again on a drama show. We have a number of dramatic fight scenes here. We laugh at each other after each shoot. Matanda na pala talaga kami. We easily get tired.



ABS-CBN is reportedly working on a project for Judy Ann Santos and Piolo Pascual, shown here at a Subic beach.

Q: How much of the original script can be found in "Habang May Buhay"?

A: Seventy percent of the script was changed. We will not use the scenes we shot in the States anymore. We simply want to make sure that we give our audience the best. I consider the delay a blessing in disguise. Napaganda pa lalo ang storya. We now have a more powerful cast. We're very excited.

Q: Which scenes from the show do you find most memorable?

A: The ones I had with Gladys were memorable. However, I consider the day-long immersion I had with the nurses of the Philippine Nurses Association the most unforgettable. They taught me a lot, like how to properly check your blood pressure, get your temperature, how to use the injection and how to extract blood. I also learned CPR.

Q: How did that change your view of nurses?

A: I have always had great respect for our nurses. They give so much of themselves and get very little compensation for their effort. I learned that most of them don't work just for the money, but also to really help people in need.

Once a week, we go to Mt. Sinai Hospital in Sta. Rosa, Laguna, to shoot. It is there where I get to see patients being rushed to the ER. I learn a lot from my visits there. They have this book on medicines that's a big help to me, especially now that I'm taking medications for pregnancy.

Jane, my character, never thought of going abroad. She took up nursing because it's her mom's dream for her. She wants to take care of her mom, who is sick and confined in a mental institution.

Q: How did you get Sharon Cuneta to record the theme song?

A: We're very grateful to her for agreeing to do this. She is someone very close to both me and Direk Wenn (Deramas). I was told that when our producer spoke with Ate Sharon about the project, she immediately said yes.

Q: ABS-CBN is reportedly working on a project for you and Piolo Pascual. Will you accept it?

A: Piolo and I have been in good terms ever since he and Ryan had the chance to sit down and talk. We often run into each other in restaurants or bars. I see him whenever I appear on "ASAP." I'm ready to work with Piolo as long as it's for a good project.

Q: You're now doing the movie "Hating Kapatid" with Sarah Geronimo. Won't this affect your plan to get pregnant?

A: I'm excited to work with someone who's young and fresh like her. Sarah is really nice, but extremely shy. Let's just see if we end up being close friends after working on the film. I made sure to inform my producers about my plan. I asked them if it's OK to postpone work, in case I get pregnant and my doctor requires me to go on leave. Luckily, they're all OK with it as well.

"Habang May Buhay" also features Derek Ramsay, Joem Bascon, Will Devaughn, Gina Alajar, Rio Locsin, Tetchie Agbayani and John Arcilla. It premieres on Feb. 1 on the Kapamilya Primetime Bida slot.

Gabby: Angelica makes me feel young

By DOLLY ANNE CARVAJAL
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Gabby Concepcion is ecstatic to be paired with Angelica Panganiban in "I Love You, Goodbye."

"If I met her in my youth and I were single, it would be hard to resist her charms," Gabby says. "It makes me feel young to work with her."

I teased him: How many times have you said 'I love you, goodbye' in real life? "It's so hard for me to say goodbye," he replies. "I think nobody's good at goodbyes." After Gabby's hiatus in the United States, no more goodbyes for him. He's here to stay!

■ ■ ■

What can Rhian Ramos say about Alessandra de Rossi's statement that she would rather not work with Rhian after they had an unpleasant encounter at the taping of a show many controversies ago? "That's her decision," she says. "Lahat naman tayo gustong umiwas sa intriga para wala ng unnecessary stress. I'm glad to hear na bale wala na sa kanya yung issue kasi matagal na yun. Non-issue na rin sa akin yun."

■ ■ ■

Keanna Reeves wants to make up for lost time in the biz. "After I won in PBB, nangarag ako sa dami ng raket so I prayed to God na pagpahingahin niya muna ako," she says. "Aba! Dininig nga ang dasal ko kasi biglang wala na akong projects masyado so binawi ko and told the Lord joke lang po!"

Has she seen Rustom Padilla after his transformation into BB Gandanghari? It was Keanna who was with Rustom inside the PBB house when he admitted on national television that he's gay.

"We hung out once. Nagkamali ako at tinawag ko siyang Russ," she quips. "Dapat BB daw. Biniro nga ako ni Mommy Eva na sana ginawa kong BF si Rustom nung nasa bahay pa kami ni Kuya at baka di tuluyang naging bading. Crush ko pa rin siya pero happy na ko now with my live-in partner na bagets."

■ ■ ■

Phoemela Baranda laughs off rumors that she has split up for the nth time with Bamboo guitarist Ira Cruz. "I don't know how that issue started but Ira and I are okay," she says. "We have rough days, but nothing we can't handle."

How does she feel that Ira and his ex, Mylene Dizon, are again being linked? "They are really good friends. No malice there," she says. "I'm happy for Mylene having a second baby with Paolo Paraiso. I'm also friends with my exes, so it's no big deal if Ira and Mylene keep their friendship going. After my mom passed on, I let go of all grudges in my heart."

■ ■ ■

Dingdong Dantes is out to conquer more hearts as he hosts GMA 7's "Family Feud" (Monday to Friday before "Ikaw Sana"). "It will be totally different from hosting 'Starstruck.' Now I get to show my wacky side," he says. "In 'Starstruck,' I had to be serious in dealing with the contestants' struggles. I welcome the challenge of taking over Goma (on 'Feud'). He has his own style and I have mine."

How does he deal with his own family squabbles? "We try to settle things right away," he quips. "Lahat nakukuha sa magandang usapan. But sometimes, we just charge it to experience. No matter what problems arise, family members forgive one another even before the apologies come. Family is family."

Talent show faces censors' sanction

By MARINEL CRUZ
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

MANILA, Philippines—ABS-CBN has questioned the decision of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board to suspend the airing of the talent program "Showtime" for 20 days because of the "vulgar" words uttered by its contest juror Rosanna Roces on two episodes last week.

In a statement sent to Inquirer on Tuesday, ABS-CBN said it has decided to "remove" Roces as the show's juror "in the spirit of self-regulation."

"Despite this, MTRCB still imposed a 20-day preventive suspension [on] the program," the statement said. "Thus, the network questions the need for [this] when Roces has already been removed from the program."

The order signed on Monday by MTRCB chair Marissa Laguardia said the 20-day suspension was given to "Showtime" to prevent "further probable violation" of pertinent provisions of Section 3c of Presidential Decree No. 1986, which gives the MTRCB the authority to keep segments or scenes that are "immoral, indecent, contrary to law and/or good customs, injurious to the prestige of the country or its people," from being aired on television.

Roces

According to an incident report signed by three MTRCB special agents, the Jan. 4 episode featured another juror, Vice Ganda, telling Roces: "Pagkatapos mong makipaghiwalay, hinete agad ang pinalit mo. (After splitting up [with your last boyfriend], you quickly replaced him with a horserace jockey)." Roces shot back: "Walanghiya ka talaga, hayop ka, demonyo ka. 'Wag kang gan'on, nangbubuko ka ever. 'Di ka naman maganda, Vice Ganda lang ang pangalan mo. (You're shameless, a beast, a demon. Don't do that … You're not even beautiful, Vice Ganda is just your name)."

In another incident report submitted on Jan. 7, Roces was singled out for her comment to a contestant. She said: "Murahin mo 'yong teacher mo … walanghiya yang mga teacher na 'yan (Curse your teacher … these teachers are shameless) …"

In a memorandum addressed to TV Programming and Entertainment head Linggit Tan on Jan. 5, Laguardia has ordered ABS-CBN representatives to attend a conference with MTRCB board members today at the MTRCB offices in Quezon City.

"This conference is crucial … this will determine whether or not the show's suspension should be lifted," Laguardia told Inquirer on Tuesday.

"Showtime" features three groups of 10 to 15 members competing against each other. A fourth group is picked randomly from teams that did not pass the auditions that day. After the fourth group's performance, a four-member jury decides whether it deserves to be a part of the main contest.

The judges then rate each group from 1 to 10. The group with the highest score wins and is given the chance to compete in the weekly showdown. Weekly winners compete in the finals.

"Showtime" is hosted by Vhong Navarro and Anne Curtis. Meantime, a new show titled "Magpasikat," with the same format and employs the same hosts and jurors, takes over the "Showtime" slot.

Maharlika – Opinyon

EDITORIAL

Devastation

The page 1 headline was dramatic, and deadly accurate: "Earthquake shatters Haiti" conveyed the epic scale of the devastation that has broken Port-au-Prince, the Haitian capital, and its surrounding towns. The extent of the impact of the strongest earthquake to strike the country in over 200 years still needs to be determined, and indeed seems to grow bigger by the hour, but eyewitness accounts and the first pictures and video images already paint a bleak portrait of utter ruin: thousands of buildings and houses and structures collapsed, perhaps (according to one Haitian official, who could only speculate) over a hundred thousand people dead. And its nightmare has only begun.

As another disaster-prone country, we should do at least three things. We should commiserate with the Haitians, and send them, individually or collectively, through Red Cross or United Nations channels, whatever aid packages or even cash we can spare.

We should send a small rescue and recovery team to Haiti post-haste. Size should not be an issue; the need of the day is reciprocity.

The United States has already sent a flotilla from its base in Guantanamo. Both China and Brazil have committed sizable resources. But the scale of the devastation in Haiti is so immense even a small contingent from another at-risk country can immediately treat the injured or even save lives. Dispatching a small contingent will be no mere tokenism, but an act of necessity.

Not least, we should learn from the lessons emerging from the Haitian catastrophe. It should help remind us that—as experts have warned again and again—parts of the Philippines, including the urban sprawl of Metro Manila, are highly vulnerable to the impact of earthquakes.

Much of the damage from the Haitian quake could have been avoided. All accounts seem to agree that construction standards in the "poorest country in the Western hemisphere" were downright shoddy. We are, to be sure, one of the major economies in Southeast Asia, but the higher construction standards we have integrated into our statutes and our regulations have not always been met. Corruption, or the temptation to make an extra buck by taking a short cut, has made some of our buildings more vulnerable to earthquakes. (Indeed, some geologists believe that some landmark buildings have been built on a faultline, or near one.)

We can heed the emerging lessons of Haiti immediately, beginning with the government publication of a seismic hazard map of the Philippines. We can revisit existing contingency plans, in light of the reminder issued last June, by a UN official, that because of Metro Manila's history of seismic activity, a magnitude 7 to 8 earthquake is bound to hit it.

There is as yet no machine that can predict an earthquake, but considering the possible consequences to a densely populated area like Metro Manila, we would do well, right now, to heed the lessons of Haiti.

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Who's afraid of Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo?

There's The Rub
By CONRADO DE QUIROS
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

Was there ever any doubt she'd cling on?

I've gotten hoarse shouting it from the rooftops, feeling at some point like Cassandra given the gift of prophecy and the curse of not being believed. President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo herself justifies her decision to run as representative in this wise, or unwise: "Public service is emblazoned on my DNA."

One can imagine many things imprinted on Arroyo's DNA, but public service is not one of them. Greed is so, a greed so clasping, grasping, and clutching that nothing is too low for her to stoop down to. Ambition is so, a need for power so vast, so overpowering, so vital to her being that she cannot for one second live without it. Her voice is so, nobody even bothering to ask whether it was really her caught on tape plotting with Virgilio Garcillano to kidnap a public school teacher in Tawi-Tawi, the raspy croak with the kolehiyala accent being so distinctive, so DNA-imprinted, so her for anyone to think otherwise.

The slings and arrows of outraged fortune came flying thick and fast. "As president, Arroyo will hold the power and funds to crush the opposition," said Nene Pimentel. "She is drunk with power; I think she needs professional help," said Teddy Casiño. "Her ultimate goal is to become House speaker and ram through Charter change; (she wants) to render Noynoy's victory useless," said Mar Roxas. "I am not surprised; she is still motivated by political survival at all costs," said Kiko Pangilinan.

I agree that Arroyo is everything that these statements say she is. And I agree that Arroyo will do everything that these statements say she will. But I disagree—and this is truly important—that all this represents any great threat today.

When I was warning shrilly about Arroyo dragging the country to hell first before she allowed herself to be dragged away from the throne room, she was still in a position to drag the country to hell. I have little doubt she will still try to. But I have just as little doubt she won't get far. Not today, not after the sea change that has happened to the country. She will thrash about, she will curse about, she will banzai or bonsai about, but none of it will do her any good. She will continue to screw the country, but she will not benefit from it. She will continue to screw the country, but she won't prevent her downfall from it.

The notion that she can escape prosecution by becoming representative is silly. Being a representative does not give immunity for crimes over and beyond the call of self-preservation. Arroyo didn't just steal money—though that is staggering enough in itself: Erap only made it as the 10th biggest crook in world in Transparency International, she should make it to third, after Suharto and Marcos—she stole the vote. Arroyo didn't just steal the vote—though that is staggering enough in itself: she turned the electoral exercise, as nobody had done since Marcos, into a minor calisthenics, voters trekking to the polls to fill out ballots that would not be counted—she stole lives. She not only stole lives—though that is staggering enough in itself, ushering as it did the culture of impunity, which is really a pale phrase to describe the murder of crows or the slaughter of the innocents or the gunning down of suspects and burying them in shallow graves—she stole everything else. She stole this country's hope, she stole this country's spirit, she stole this country's life.

Being congressman did not save Romeo Jalosjos from jail for the rape of a minor. Being congresswoman will not save Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo from jail for the rape of a nation.

The notion that Arroyo will be in a position to win friends and influence people, least of all the congressmen, is even sillier. It is the product of having at once too much imagination and too little. Too much imagination because it presumes that even if she became speaker of the House, and even if she became as powerful as Jose de Venecia once was, she would continue to dictate the course of this country. Look where De Venecia is now.

And too little imagination because it fails to grasp what happens when one is out of power, which is what no longer being the president is. You stop being top dog, you lose everything. One would think that should be obvious from the defections violently rocking Lakas-Kampi-CMD today with Gibo's miserable showing. While Arroyo is still president—or so in title if not in vote.

In fact, it wasn't the Muslims who invented "political entrepreneurship," it was the Christians. It wasn't the warlords of the south who discovered that the best way to keep power was to be a source of beneficence to your supporters, while trumping your enemies in heinousness and firepower, a logic the Ampatuans merely drove to hellish heights. It was the political clans of the north, recognizing early on that the only way to control wealth was to control power, and the only way to keep power was to distribute loot to supporters, while trumping your enemies in force and armed might, a logic Marcos and Arroyo merely drove to sublime depths.

Without the loot and lard of Malacañang, how can Arroyo keep anyone in leash, least of all the congressmen whose emblem consists of an outstretched open palm with the motto, "Your credibility is good, but we need cash"?

And all of this forgets the change that has made this country unrecognizable since Aug. 5. Since that watershed, GMA's fortune has plunged faster than a torpedoed WWII ship in the Atlantic. The lucky SOB has run out of luck she should thank whoever it is she thanks that her *malas* hasn't rubbed off on Manny Pacquiao. Arroyo is through, Arroyo is finished. Arroyo is dead. The massacre wreaked by her allies, the Ampatuans, in Maguindanao just drove the last nail on her coffin.

Who's afraid of Rep. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo?

'Monumento'

Looking Back
By AMBETH OCAMPO
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

On Bonifacio Day, 13 years ago, I tried to keep a straight face upon seeing then Mayor Alfredo Lim and Vice Mayor Lito Atienza sporting funny Katipunan hats. The mood was somber, everyone was in Filipiniana attire, and then Nick Joaquin growled from the back of the crowd, "Where are the masses?"

His remark made me remember the title of Teodoro Agoncillo's landmark book, "Revolt of the Masses: The Story of Bonifacio and the Katipunan." I turned and saw the National Artist for Literature in an ill-fitting barong Tagalog that had seen better days and multiple washings. His breath reeking of beer, he growled louder, "Where are the workers?" Militant groups were waving their red flags elsewhere.

Speeches rolled on as we sat on plastic chairs, the morning sun melting the make-up of the women and drawing beads of sweat from the men. There I was reflecting on the figure of Andres Bonifacio created by National Artist Guillermo Tolentino. Bonifacio stood above us on a granite pedestal. I asked myself: Where was the iconic white camisa de chino and the screaming red neckerchief and kundiman pants rolled up to the knees revealing bare feet? Tolentino's Bonifacio was not the screaming figure in Carlos Francisco's mural inside Manila City Hall. Tolentino's Bonifacio was not the image of the old Balintawak monument that now stands in front of Vinzons Hall in UP Diliman. Tolentino's Bonifacio was garbed in an elegant embroidered barong Tagalog. Tolentino's Bonifacio stood with a quiet but defiant dignity characteristic of heroes. Mayor Lim probably found this image so lame that he commissioned Eduardo Castrillo to conjure a multi-colored komiks version of the Hero of Manila beside City Hall.

Gazing at Tolentino's Bonifacio I remembered that this area between the neo-classic Manila Post Office and the art-deco Metropolitan Theater was known as Liwasang Bonifacio. The same place was formerly Plaza Lawton. When Philippine history was rewritten to reflect the Filipino viewpoint, changes occurred not only in textbooks and our consciousness but in more concrete ways, with streets being renamed. Dewey Boulevard, commemorating George Dewey and the US naval victory in Manila Bay on May 1, 1898 over the antiquated Spanish fleet, was changed to [Manuel] Roxas Boulevard. Plaza Lawton gave way to Liwasang Bonifacio. Nobody remembers US General Lawton, the highest-ranking casualty of the Philippine-American War. Lawton was killed by a sniper in San Mateo, then under the military command of Filipino General Licerio Geronimo.

Before serving in the Philippines, Lawton was involved in the capture of the Indian chief Geronimo. Isn't it ironic that Lawton was killed by the band of a Filipino general named Geronimo?

Street names, monuments and commemorations are supposed to make us remember, but in fact nobody remembers. Last Monday, as guest of the City of Caloocan, I was able to go round the Bonifacio monument in the rotonda once known as Grace Park because it was donated to the city by His Grace, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Manila. Today, the place is known simply as Monumento because it simply is the most inspiring piece of public art anywhere in the Philippines. This masterpiece by Tolentino has been declared as both a National Historical Landmark and a National Cultural Treasure.

Sculpted in parts from 1930-1933 and cast in bronze in Milan, Italy, Tolentino created the story of the Philippine Revolution of 1896 from the execution of Gomburza in 1872. It is 333 feet high, the number corresponding to the 333 years the Philippines was under Spanish rule. The obelisk rests on an octagonal base, each side commemorating the eight provinces placed under martial law after the outbreak of the Philippine Revolution in 1896. Every detail in the monument has a symbolic or historical meaning now unfortunately forgotten.

I am fortunate to have met and interviewed Tolentino's widow, Paz Raymundo, before she suffered a crippling aneurysm in her pre-war home along Retiro Street in Manila. She showed me the studio and the library of the maestro, and even cooked the maestro's favorite spaghetti sauce of tomato and chicken. After seeing the monument again, 25 years since my first visit, I am left with two lifelong regrets. First, when Mrs. Tolentino offered me a square granite slab, the only one imported from Italy left unused when the monument was built, it was too heavy for me to carry. Second, after she showed me the cheerful floral curtains she had made for their living room, she also showed me the patterns for the curtains which were cut out of the original blueprints for the Monumento!

Years later, when I told her I should have kept them, she replied, "Why didn't you ask for them? They have been lying around the house for so long!"

Bonifacio will be remembered again next November and we can only hope that each commemoration leads to a deeper understanding rather than forgetting. Andres Bonifacio, National Hero and Founder of the Katipunan, is named after St. Andrew the Apostle who was martyred on an X-shaped cross and St. Boniface, Apostle of Germany, martyr, patron of brewers, and sometimes invoked against sodomy. There are so many stray connections that can be woven into a new tapestry to enrich boring textbook history.

Comments are welcome at aocampo@ateneo.edu.

Maharlika – Samu't Sari

FLU SHOTS HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

People line up to get free H1N1 flu shots from the Department of Public Health at the Tuesday public market at the Garapan Fishing Base on Tuesday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Delia Sablan, right, gets a free H1N1 flu shot from a Department of Public Health nurse at the Tuesday public market at the Garapan Fishing Base on Tuesday.

A long line of people waiting for their turn to receive free H1N1 flu vaccination is seen from a window of an old building at the Garapan Fishing Base on Tuesday.

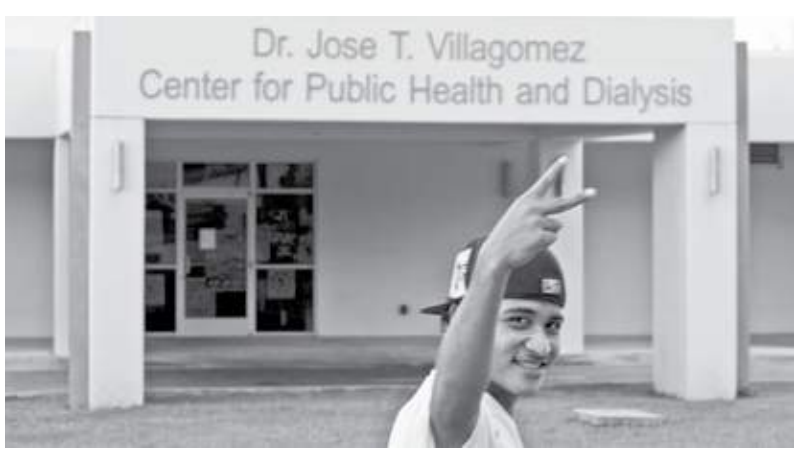
HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

4. Japan Upcoming Activities
Marketing Opportunities for Partners
1. Co-op Trade Promotions
2. Workshops/Annual Trade Seminars
3. Trade Newsletters (issued monthly a
over 1,300 travel trade representativ
4. Japanese Website
5. Press Releases (distributed to appro
6. FAM Trips (both trade and media)
7. Trade Shows
8. Sales Call Assistance

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Michael Merner, a representative from the Marianas Visitors Authority's offshore offices in Japan and South Korea, addresses the crowd at the MVA bi-annual general membership meeting at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe on Thursday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO



'V FOR DR. V'

A man walks in front of the Dr. Jose T. Villagomez Center for Public Health and Dialysis, which U.S. Department of the Interior officials toured on Tuesday.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

RED CARPET HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

Gov. Benigno R. Fitial, left, and first lady Josie Fitial, second from left, walk the red carpet for the governor's public inauguration ceremony on Monday afternoon at the Saipan World Resort in Susupe.

COURTESY CALL

From left, Assistant U.S. Interior Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta, Federal Labor Ombudsman Pamela Brown, and Insular Affairs Director Nik Pula during an interview with reporters on Capital Hill on Thursday afternoon.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

NMI FUNDING

Assistant U.S. Interior Secretary for Insular Affairs Tony Babauta, left, signs a $1.2 million in grant funding for the CNMI while Gov. Benigno R. Fitial looks on during a press conference on Thursday on Capital Hill.

HAIDEE V. EUGENIO

CONGRATULATIONS!

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dennis C. Mendiola poses with his family after his commissioning ceremony.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Dennis C. Mendiola poses with his wife Ana at the UOG Field House.

Dennis C. Mendiola graduated with a Bachelors of Science in Public Administration and was also commissioned to 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army on Dec. 20, 2009, at the University of Guam.

YoungStyle

THE WASHINGTON POST

When Savoy Bradford, who has a left ventricular assist device (LVAD) to keep his heart beating, goes for a checkup, Carolyn Hanny Gilbert, the LVAD coordinator at Washington Hospital Center, checks the records of his machine to see what kind of alerts it has emitted since his last visit and quizzes him about them. Then she asks him about the numerous medications he takes. "It's important that all our LVAD patients know this stuff on their own," she says.

For teen, a lifesaving machine

By MARGARET WEBB PRESSLER
(C) 2010, THE WASHINGTON POST

Doctors can do a lot to repair the human heart when something goes wrong. But when the heart gets so sick it can't be fixed by typical medicines or surgery, doctors sometimes turn to something out of science fiction: an artificial heart. Such devices are not used very often, but that's what saved the life of Savoy Bradford, a 16-year-old from Suitland, Md.

Savoy got a virus last summer that made his heart so swollen and weak it could barely pump anymore. This kind of sudden heart failure is very unusual, but doctors had a plan to save his life: They put something called a left ventricular assist device, or LVAD for short, in his chest, next to his heart. Here's how it works:

Blood flows from your body into the right side of your heart, which pumps that blood to the lungs to soak up oxygen. That blood then flows back into the left side of your heart, where a chamber called the left ventricle squeezes really hard. That pushes your blood through a huge artery, called the aorta, to the rest of your body. This constant squeezing action is what you feel as your heartbeat.

An LVAD is about the size of a lemon, with tubes on each end. In Savoy's body, one end is attached to the bottom of the heart and the other to his aorta. The powerful motor inside the LVAD forces oxygenated blood from Savoy's heart, through his aorta and to the rest of his body.

Savoy got his LVAD in August and has spent months recovering. But last week he went back to school at Forestville Military Academy, where he is in 10th grade. After being so sick, he couldn't wait. "School means more to me now," he said.

Savoy can do many things he did before, but he has some limitations. The biggest one is that there is a cord running from his artificial heart, through a tiny opening in his side that's taped thoroughly with bandages, to a battery pack he takes with him everywhere. The batteries and their control panel weigh four pounds, as does the extra set of both that he must always have with him. It's like lugging a stack of books around all day, which Savoy doesn't enjoy.

You might be surprised to know that Savoy no longer has a pulse, even though he's very much alive. Your pulse comes from your heart pumping your blood, and Savoy's heart isn't doing that.

Doctors hope that Savoy's heart will heal itself and start beating well enough that they can take out the LVAD and let Savoy's own heart do its job. But if that doesn't happen, Savoy might need a heart transplant, in which another heart would replace his.

For now, though, Savoy is just happy to be alive, back with his friends and in school.

By FRED BOWEN
Special to The Washington Post

Bowen is the author of kids' books including as "Touchdown Trouble" and "Soccer Team Upset."

No Joke: Wizards' Arenas needs to grow up

"I'm a goofball." That's how Gilbert Arenas, the Washington Wizards star guard, described himself last week.

Boy, is he right.

Arenas was suspended from the National Basketball Association because he brought guns into the Wizards locker room several weeks ago. It seems that Arenas got into an argument with teammate Javaris Crittenton over a card game as the team flew home from a West Coast road trip. Witnesses said the players threatened each other.

Later, Arenas brought four unloaded guns to the locker room and placed them in front of Crittenton's locker with a note that read, "pick one." Two witnesses claim that Crittenton then pulled out a loaded gun.

Arenas claims he was just joking around. He even made fun of the whole incident by forming his thumbs and fingers into guns and pretending to shoot his laughing teammates in a huddle before a game against the Philadelphia 76ers earlier this month.

Guns are no joke. Little kids who don't know better may run around pointing their fingers or toy guns at each other, but Arenas isn't a little kid. He's an adult, and he should know not to make fun of something so serious.

Well, no one is laughing now. Arenas may not play for the Wizards or any other NBA team for a long time. District of Columbia police are looking into whether Arenas may have broken the city's strict gun laws by bringing guns to Verizon Center.

For years, Arenas has been an exciting player who scores lots of points. But he has never been a player, such as Tim Duncan, Kevin Garnett or Dwyane Wade, who led a team to a championship. Those guys play hard on offense and defense and do everything they can to help make their team and teammates better. They are real pros, not goofballs.

Maybe Arenas has never been a championship player because he has been too busy joking around and being a goofball. Reports indicate that Arenas plays practical jokes—some mean, some gross and most not very funny—on his teammates. It seems to me that such jokes can tear a team apart, not make it better.

Kids know it is important to act your age. It's not cool for a 10-year-old to act like a kindergartner. Or for a teen-ager to act like he belongs in grade school.

Arenas is 28 years old. He is the father of three children. He is perhaps the most important player on his team. It is time for Arenas to grow up, start acting his age and stop being a goofball.

Children's board games go beyond lessons learned in the classroom

Disconnect the Xbox, uninstall the computer game software and close the laptop. You want your child to have fun but learn at the same time, at a fraction of the cost? Play a board game, experts say.

Candy Land, for example, in its 61st year, might be one of the best deals going in early childhood education, using visions of sweet treats to disguise lessons in color recognition and counting. And its colorful cousin Chutes and Ladders has been subtly instilling early math skills since 1943 by exposing kids to the concept of numbers. Both cost about $5 at Toys R Us. Some teachers tout Uno, introduced in 1971, as a way to teach number and color recognition, sorting skills and strategic thinking. Uno is $7 at Toys R Us.

There are so many benefits to playing board games. For years, they've been known to help children with social interaction, taking turns and learning to follow rules and to win and lose gracefully. But teachers also find ways to use board games to supplement their lesson plans, particularly in preschool and early elementary school.

"Any game that requires a student to count and move a game piece at the same time is good for developing one-to-one correspondence while counting," said Jayne Cooke-Cobern, a kindergarten teacher in Woodbridge, Va. She lists Trouble, Chutes and Ladders, Uno, Yahtzee, Racko and Apples to Apples among her favorite games for the classroom.

"They're not just paper and pencil for little ones," said Lisa Barnes, also a kindergarten teacher, who uses Memory (recognition of numbers, sight words and color words), bingo (letters, shapes and rhyming words) and dominoes (numbers and the concept of more and less) with her students. "It gets everyone using their hands. They are having fun and learning at the same time."

According to the NPD Group, a market research firm based in Port Washington, N.Y., sales of board games through October were up 4 percent over the same period in 2008. Web-connected toys were down 39 percent.

Toy experts attribute the increase in board game sales to the recession. A board game can cost less than a movie ticket and can be played repeatedly. These games are strong sellers for another reason: the moms and dads who decades later can still name all the properties around a Monopoly board or recall a particularly satisfying triple word score in Scrabble.

A 2007 study by Carnegie Mellon University showed that in a group of low-income preschoolers, playing a board game with numbers, such as Chutes and Ladders, helped them improve their performance on four kinds of numerical tasks. Those gains were still evident nine weeks later.

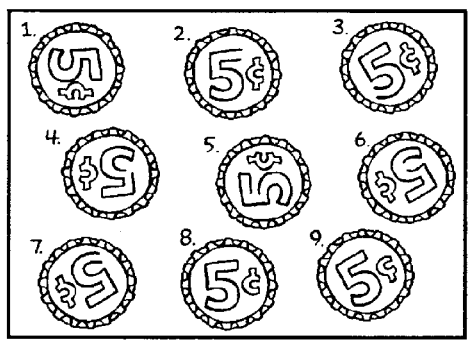
By pushing young children to think strategically and plan ahead, and to attach abstract thoughts to concrete objects, many games can help develop more-sophisticated thinking skills, educators said.

"One of the primary skills (board games) develop is self-regulation," said Peter Pizzolongo, director of professional development at the National Association for the Education of Young Children. "You have to be able to wait your turn and think ahead.... With many board games, particularly those that involve numerals, you have to learn your numbers. But being able to attach those numbers to something you're doing requires a higher level of function, and that's going to happen with board games."

Marilyn Fleetwood, president of the Academy of the Child, a Montessori preschool and elementary school in Germantown, Md., says her teachers use games such as Lotto, bingo and Scrabble to improve fine motor skills and vocabulary. They also have turned Candy Land into a gross-motor extravaganza on occasion, with the entire floor serving as the game board and the children acting as markers.

Fleetwood also uses board games to teach social skills. Unlike reading, writing and math, there are no established rules or tricks for teaching social skills.

"Parents get upset when they see that their children are playing (in school)," Fleetwood said, but "play is probably the most important skill for life. Most children learn to read, but social skills are one of those things that really have to be developed. And that's what you get with board games." ***(The Washington Post)***



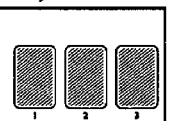
DON'T FIZZ OUT! Two of the old soda-pop bottle caps above are exactly alike. Can you find them in 30 seconds?

Answer: Caps 3 and 7.

Illustrated by David Coulson

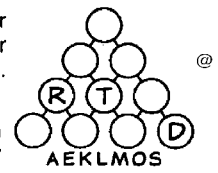
A CARD CONUNDRUM! To the right are three facedown cards. Can you figure out their values using these hints?

1. There is at least one queen just to the right of a king.
2. There is at least one queen just to the left of a queen.
3. There is at least one spade just to the left of a heart.
4. There is at least one spade just to the right of a spade.



Answer: Card 1: King of spades. Card 2: Queen of spades. Card 3: Queen of hearts.

CHAIN REACTION! Take the seven letters printed below our diagram and place them in the circles so that eight four-letter words can be read, top to bottom, along the connecting lines. All the words will begin with the letter in the top circle.

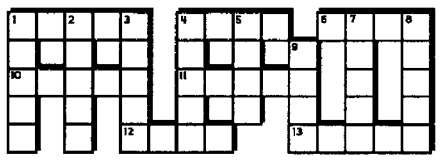


Answers: Top to bottom, left to right: Mark, mars, mats, mate, mots, mote, mole, mold.

Junior Whirl

by Charles Barry Townsend

TRY BEING "DEFT" AT "DECIPHERING" THIS "DELIGHTFUL" PROBLEM!



Below is a list of 15 words that start with either "D" or "E." You must use these words to complete the puzzle grid to the left. Use the good old trial-and-error method.

"D" Words	"E" Words
DADO	EDGE
DEED	ESPY
DENSE	EYED
DENTS	EASEL
DODGE	EAVES
DREAD	ENDED
DROLL	
DUDED	
DUPED	

Answers: (Across) 1. Duded. 4. Eyed. 6. Deed. 10. Dense. 11. Duped. 12. Dado. 13. Easel. (Down) 1. Dodge. 2. Dents. 3. Dread. 4. Ended. 5. Espy. 7. Eaves. 8. Droll. 9. Edge.

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Top dogs

The American Kennel Club recently teamed with AOL's PawNation.com to find out what the top 125 dogs in pop culture were, and how they ranked. The criteria for making this list included how loudly students at certain colleges cheered for their mascots, and reader polls at PawNation. I'm not entirely sure their research methods were sound, but I guess it was fun.

Topping the pop culture list was Snoopy. Do kids today even know about this "timeless" Peanuts comic strip character? I can't argue with it —I'm a big fan of Snoopy, particularly his endless Sopwith Camel dogfights.

Texas A&M's mascot, Reveille, made No. 2 on the list. This was the dog who was "cheered" into the rankings. Hmm.

Other rankings seem fine: Scooby Doo rounded out the top three; Eddie, from the defunct "Frasier" series, was next; and Brian, the talking dog from "Family Guy," got the No. 10 spot. I was a little confused by other rankings. Two songs made the top ten, "How Much is That Doggie in the Window" and "Who Let the Dogs Out." Okay, I guess if cartoon pups can make the rankings, a completely abstract use of dogs in a symbolic manner by a rap group is fine, too.

Anyway, I'd love to list the top 25 or 50 or 125 claimed on the AKC/AOL list, but it's not to be found on either

site and no actual link was given on the release. Way to go, AKC/AOL. Here's the top 10, anyway:

1. Snoopy
2. Texas A&M's Reveille
3. Scooby Doo
4. Eddie from the TV show "Frasier"
5. Pound Puppy toys
6. Painting, "Dogs Playing Poker"
7. Song, "How Much is That Doggie in the Window"
8. Georgetown's Jack the Bulldog
9. Song, "Who Let the Dogs Out"
10. Brian Griffin from the animated TV show "Family Guy"

■ ■ ■

Send your tips, questions and comments to Paw's Corner, c/o King Features Weekly Service, P.O. Box 536475, Orlando, FL 32853-6475, or e-mail them to ask@pawscorner.com.

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Strange BUT TRUE

By Samantha Weaver

■ It was American cartoonist, humorist and journalist Kin Hubbard who made the following sage observation: "There's no secret about success. Did you ever know a successful man who didn't tell you about it?"

■ Next time you're in Iowa, you might want to stop by the rural town of Riverside, which touts itself as the future birthplace of Captain James T. Kirk. Yep, the *future* birthplace. It seems that "Star Trek" creator Gene Roddenberry asserted that the character of James Tiberius Kirk was born in Iowa, but he didn't specify exactly where. In 1985, the Riverside City Council voted to declare their town the future birthplace of the character, later writing to Roddenberry and receiving his approval. In honor of its newfound claim to fame, the city began hosting an annual Trek Fest, complete with a Spockapalooza battle of the bands.

■ If you enjoy cooking, you might have heard of some of the following cookbooks: "Kill It and Grill It," "The Joy of Pickling," "Full of Beans," "The Stinking Cookbook" and "I Can't Believe It's Not Meat!" Then again, maybe not.

■ The term "bric-a-brac," usually used to refer to a collection of tawdry trinkets, comes from the French, where its original meaning was "at random."

■ Most parents of small children know that trampolines can be dangerous, and they are. Every year, nearly 100,000 people receive emergency-room treatment for injuries sustained while using trampolines. Those injuries are hardly ever fatal, though. Pools, on the other hand, are far more deadly; more than 1,000 people in the United States die in swimming pools annually.

■ ■ ■

Thought for the Day: "If living conditions don't stop improving in this country, we're going to run out of humble beginnings for our great men."—Russell P. Askue

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MAGIC MAZE ● YES WORDS

Y	U	R	O	L	J	G	S	D	A	X	V	S	P	N
K	I	F	C	A	X	L	V	S	T	Q	T	R	E	A
O	L	J	R	H	Y	S	E	S	C	S	A	R	V	A
X	V	T	R	E	P	A	E	N	E	E	O	I	L	J
H	F	D	S	B	T	Y	D	Y	Y	S	H	Y	X	V
T	R	T	P	O	A	S	H	R	E	S	E	Y	A	H
M	N	I	A	R	T	S	E	Y	E	K	C	U	B	K
I	G	E	G	D	D	T	E	Y	B	T	C	Z	X	W
U	T	E	Y	E	S	H	O	T	L	R	S	O	Q	O
N	S	E	Y	E	H	S	I	F	L	O	J	E	S	I
G	S	E	Y	B	D	O	O	G	F	D	P	C	Y	A

Find the listed words in the diagram. They run in all directions - forward, backward, up, down and diagonally.

Buckeyes	Eyestrain	Polyester	Yeshiva
Dyes	Fisheyes	Shyest	Yesterday
Eyeshot	Goodbyes	Slyest	Yesteryear
Eyesore	Grayest	Sockeyes	

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GO FIGURE! by Linda Thistle

The idea of Go Figure is to arrive at the figures given at the bottom and right-hand columns of the diagram by following the arithmetic signs in the order they are given (that is, from left to right and top to bottom). Use only the numbers below the diagram to complete its blank squares and use each of the nine numbers only once.

DIFFICULTY: ★

★ Moderate ★★ Difficult
★★★ GO FIGURE!

	x		–		33
÷		+		–	
	+		x		30
x		x		x	
	–		x		35
24		33		28	

2 3 4 5 6 7 7 8 9

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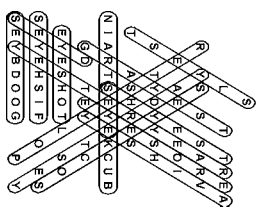
MAGIC MAZE ANSWER



GO FIGURE ANSWER

6	x	7	–	9	33
÷		+		–	
2	+	4	x	5	30
x		x		x	
8	–	3	x	7	35
24		33		28	

Make and fly a birthday pennant

When there's a birthday in your house, fly a pennant! This personal pennant celebrates the occasion and how unique the birthday child is. Make them together with your children now, and enjoy using them on their special day this year.

Donna's Day Creative family fun

by Donna Erickson

Here's the stuff you'll need:

■ Sports pennant (for a pattern)
■ Craft foam sheet the size of the pennant and smaller sheets in different colors
■ Paper
■ Pen and marker
■ Glue
■ Paintbrush
■ Odds and ends for decorations, such as buttons, yarn, shells and ribbons
■ 1/2-inch dowel, 24 to 36 inches long

Here's the fun:

Lay the sports pennant down on a foam sheet and trace the shape with a pen, then cut it out. Outline the letters of your child's name on a piece of paper and draw around them with a pencil on foam sheets, using contrasting colors if you wish.

Pour a little household glue into a shallow plate and with a brush, coat one side of the letters. Glue them on the pennant.

Now ask the birthday child, "What's really special to you? Let's picture it on your pennant." The answer might be horses or in-line skating, chess or basketball. If the interest is quite difficult to create, figure out the best symbol for whatever your child holds dear. For example, a saddle for a horse or a king piece for a chess set.

Draw the outline for the shape you want to create on another piece of craft foam and cut it out. Then think fun details. If it's in-line skates, use buttons for the wheels. Draw lines on the basketball, or glue yarn on the saddle for reins.

Once everything is drawn in and glued on, let it dry. Cut some horizontal slits along the straight vertical side of the flag about an inch and a half apart. Weave the dowel through the slits until the pennant is flying straight up and down and out.

Finally, grab a few medium-length pieces of ribbon and secure them in a small knot onto the dowel so that the ribbons cascade downward.

And there you have it—a birthday pennant! Wave it around and display it on your front porch so neighbors know there is a birthday child in your house. Or, fly it indoors propped between mounds of fruit in a large bowl or in a planter next to the dieffenbachia.

Extra tip: You need not limit the pennant's use to birthdays. Wave it if your child has had a special day in school, won a big game or comes home with a good report card. You may even want to wave it when things aren't going well, just to show that the family cares.

■ ■ ■

Donna Erickson's award-winning television series "Donna's Day" airs on public television nationwide. Visit www.donnasday.com to find out when it airs on your local PBS station and to sign up for Donna's e-newsletter.

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Life & Style

O'Donnell: Time for Leno to step aside

PASADENA, Calif. (AP)—Rosie O'Donnell said Thursday that it's time for Jay Leno to step aside for Conan O'Brien and "not try to flatten his tires before he even gets going."

NBC is seeking to move Leno into his old 11:35 p.m. "Tonight" show time slot and push O'Brien past midnight again, after Leno's prime-time show failed. O'Brien is balking at the move after only seven months at "Tonight," and a negotiated exit from NBC seems likely.

O'Donnell, talking to reporters while promoting an HBO documentary, said she was a huge fan of O'Brien.

"If you're privileged enough to drive the bus, you should say, 'Thank you' and drive it to the best of your ability, and when it's time for them to hire a new driver, you should say 'Thank you for allowing me to drive this as long as I did' and pass the keys to the new guy with red hair, and not try to flatten his tires before he even gets going," she said.

O'Donnell was even more blunt on her blog, saying Leno had bullied his way back into college so he could be the quarterback again.

She also revealed on the blog that when Leno started on the "Tonight" show in the early 1990s, NBC executive Brandon Tartikoff offered her the chance to sub for Leno on Friday nights as Joan Rivers did for Johnny Carson. O'Donnell said Leno nixed the idea.

The former daytime talk show host said she has no interest in late night, particularly given what's going on now.

"That question today is like asking if I'd want to have a vacation in Haiti," she said.

NBC *announces post-Leno prime-time lineup*

LOS ANGELES (AP)—New and veteran NBC dramas and a comedy produced by Jerry Seinfeld will take over the bulk of the prime-time slots soon to be vacated by Jay Leno.

NBC announced Thursday that the freshman drama "Parenthood" and the relocated "Law & Order" and "Law & Order: Special Victim Units" will fill three slots. Another will go to the comedy panel series "The Marriage Ref" from Seinfeld.

"Dateline NBC" will fill another 10 p.m. EST slot.

The new lineup will debut after NBC's coverage of the Winter Olympics from Feb. 12-28.

Still in flux was NBC's effort to make way for Leno's return to late-night TV by bumping Conan O'Brien and "Tonight" to midnight, a plan O'Brien has rejected. The network was in talks with both hosts.

His show will go into a previously scheduled week of repeats on Jan. 25, NBC said Thursday.

For now, though, dramas can claim to be winners in the schedule shake up, reclaiming most of the slots lost when NBC decided to experiment with Leno's show as a cheaper alternative.

AP

In this Jan. 10, 2010 file photo, actor and comedian Jerry Seinfeld arrives at the NBC Universal Winter 2010 press tour party in Pasadena, Calif.

"Law & Order" will return after the Games on Monday, March 1, with a two-hour episode airing at 9 p.m. EST. The show, in its 20th season, will begin airing regularly at 10 p.m. the following week.

"Parenthood," with an ensemble cast including Lauren Graham and Peter Krause, will debut 10 p.m. EST Tuesday, March 2.

The "Special Victims Unit" member of the "Law & Order" family will air in the final prime-time slot on Wednesdays, starting March 3.

The other new 10 p.m. show, "The Marriage Ref" with comedian Tom Papa, will air Thursdays beginning March 4 after a Feb. 28 sneak peek following the closing ceremony of the Olympics. "Dateline NBC" will air 9-11 p.m. EST Fridays starting March 5.

Also bowing after the Olympics are "Who Do You Think You Are?"—a look at the family history of celebrities, 8 p.m. EST Friday, March 5, and "Minute to Win It," a game show with TV food personality Guy Fieri, 8 p.m. EST Sunday, March 14.

'Blonde' bombshell: London critics praise musical

LONDON (AP)—OMG: "Legally Blonde: The Musical" has warmed the hearts of London's crusty theater critics.

The stage show, based on the 2001 film starring Reese Witherspoon, tells the story of Elle Woods, a bubbly blonde from Los Angeles who discovers her inner strength at Harvard Law School. The show earned a lukewarm reception on Broadway, where it ran for a year and a half before closing in October 2008.

"Blonde" opened Wednesday at London's Savoy Theatre after a month of previews that saw large, enthusiastic and female-dominated audiences embracing its brand of frivolous fun.

Despite themselves, British critics were largely won over, too.

"I tried, I really tried to hate this show, but resistance is futile," wrote Charles Spencer in Thursday's Daily Telegraph, praising the show as "light, fast, fun and frothy."

"The stage show has its tongue in its cheek throughout, it knows it is ridiculous and infantile, and celebrates the fact with knowing wit," he said.

The Independent's Paul Taylor declared the musical "ridiculously enjoyable from start to finish," and a big improvement on the movie. He said the lyrics by Heather Hach were "unflaggingly funny" and the score by Laurence O'Keefe and Nell Benjamin full of "brassiness, bite, joie de vivre, sheer cheek, and even the odd strain of sadness."

The Times' Benedict Nightingale was another convert, won over by the show as well as the enthusiasm of the audience, who "cheered, whistled and made my cavils seem precious."

The Guardian's Michael Billington was skeptical—dubbing the show "preposterous"—but still preferred the stage version to the movie.

"The plot is pap, the musical unmemorable, the dancing often hefty," said The Daily Mail's often-contrarian critic Quentin Letts, although even he acknowledged that some of the lyrics were "almost worthy of Gilbert and Sullivan."

Like others, he saw a new stage star in Sheridan Smith, who plays Elle. Until now Smith was best known for roles in TV comedies including "Gavin and Stacey" and "Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps."

Besides her singing and dancing, Billington said "Her true star quality lies in a sense of mischief."

Spencer said Smith had "vitality, warmth, great comic timing and sudden moments of touching vulnerability."

The cast also includes Duncan James, a member of boy band Blue, as Elle's Harvard-bound boyfriend, and Jill Halfpenny as a lovelorn hairdresser.

The show was a box office hit even before Wednesday's opening. Critics said they could see the appeal.

"Oh my god, I'm like so totally going again," said The Independent's Taylor.

George Clooney, MTV working on a Haiti telethon

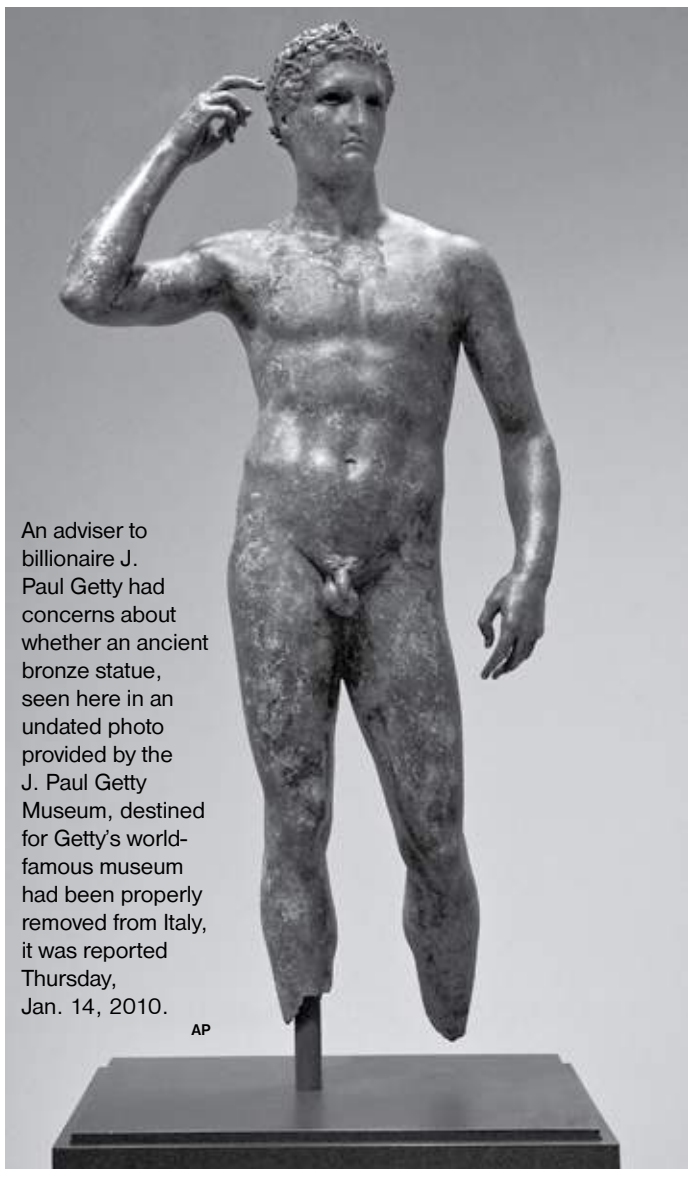
LOS ANGELES (AP)—MTV Networks is working with George Clooney to stage a telethon for Haitian earthquake relief.

MTV spokesman Mark Jafar said Thursday that details are still being worked out.

Clooney

There's no word yet about other stars getting involved. But Clooney representative Stan Rosenfield said the actor is in the process of helping organize the telethon, which likely would air Jan. 22 on all MTV Networks—which include VH1, Comedy Central and CMT—as well as on ABC, NBC, HBO and CNN.

Thousands are feared dead after the massive earthquake, and the Caribbean island nation desperately needs aid.



An adviser to billionaire J. Paul Getty had concerns about whether an ancient bronze statue, seen here in an undated photo provided by the J. Paul Getty Museum, destined for Getty's world-famous museum had been properly removed from Italy, it was reported Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010.

AP

Report: Getty's adviser was concerned statue was looted

LOS ANGELES (AP) — An adviser to billionaire J. Paul Getty had concerns about whether an ancient bronze statue destined for Getty's world-famous museum had been properly removed from Italy, it was reported Thursday.

A 1976 letter from now-deceased Getty adviser Bernard Ashmole, an Oxford archaeologist, said museum "exploits" to obtain the ancient Greek work "Victorious Youth" were a "crime." However, the letter cited by the Los Angeles Times makes no specific accusations.

The Italian government has asked a judge there to order the statue seized.

Maurizio Fiorilli, an attorney representing the Italian government, told The Associated Press on Thursday that he hadn't seen the letter, but it could be important to the case.

Fiorilli said he might mention the document in his closing argument Friday in the east coast city of Pesaro. A verdict is expected by the end of the month.

Getty museum attorney Stephen Clark said the sculpture was purchased in good faith in 1977 for $4 million.

Recently, Clark told the judge in Italy that he had reviewed museum files and found no evidence that officials knew the statue was improperly obtained.

"I wouldn't draw the conclusion that this (letter) acknowledges there was some crime," Clark, the Getty's general counsel, told the Times. "Italy has no legal foundation for a claim."

Ashmole wrote to then-museum director Stephen Garrett that the statue was mentioned in a British television show called "The Plunderers."

The museum's "exploits over the bronze statue were also given, but again in such a way as to minimize the crime," Ashmole wrote.

Garrett told the newspaper he did not recall what "crime" Ashmole was referring to in the letter.

The museum filed documents several years ago arguing that Italy has no claim to the piece because it originally was Greek and was found in international waters.

The Getty is one of several museums that in recent years have returned Roman, Greek and Etruscan artifacts that the Italian government suspected were looted and smuggled from the country.

In 2007 the Getty, without admitting any wrongdoing, agreed to return 40 ancient treasures in exchange for the long-term loan of other artifacts.

That didn't include the life-sized bronze "Victorious Youth," also called the "Athlete of Fano." The Greek masterpiece was sculpted between 300 B.C. and 100 B.C. and later carried away by Roman soldiers, but the boat carrying it apparently sank.

The artist is unknown but some scholars believe it was Lysippos, Alexander the Great's personal sculptor.

Golden Globes group: Show a go despite Haiti quake

BEVERLY HILLS, Calif. (AP)—The group behind the Golden Globes says there are no plans to alter Sunday night's awards ceremony because of the Haitian earthquake disaster.

Phil Berk, president of the Hollywood Foreign Press Association, said Thursday that "canceling the Golden Globes is not going to help anyone in Haiti."

Instead, Berk says an announcement will be made during the live NBC telecast from the Beverly Hilton Hotel that the HFPA is making a $100,000 donation to Wyclef Jean's "Yele Haiti" relief fund for the victims of the quake.

He says the HFPA hopes its example "will cause others to do the same."

Hathaway wins Harvard's Hasty Pudding award

In this June 7, 2009 file photo, actress Anne Hathaway arrives at the 63rd Annual Tony Awards in New York.

AP

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (AP)—Oscar-nominated actress Anne Hathaway can add another honor to her list: a Hasty Pudding award.

She will receive the award at a roast scheduled for Jan. 28 by Hasty Pudding Theatricals at Harvard University. It's the nation's oldest undergraduate drama troupe.

The roast features the Harvard men in drag and takes place after a parade down Massachusetts Avenue near the university in Cambridge, Mass.

Hathaway made her name as a teen in "The Princess Diaries" and has shown her acting range in comedies like "Get Smart" and dramas such as "Brokeback Mountain."

She was nominated for an Academy Award for best actress in 2009 for her role in "Rachel Getting Married."

Recent honorees have included Renee Zellweger, Charlize Theron and Scarlett Johansson.

In this May 14, 2009 file photo, Adam Goldstein, also known as DJ-AM, arrives at the T-Mobile Sidekick LX Launch Party in Los Angeles.

AP

DJ AM's estate settles plane crash lawsuit

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Court filings show DJ AM's estate has settled a lawsuit filed over a South Carolina plane crash that killed four and left the celebrity disc jockey seriously injured.

DJ AM, whose real name is Adam Goldstein, died in August in New York of an accidental overdose. Attorneys later amended the lawsuit to include a wrongful death claim.

He had been seeking $20 million in damages, but a jury would have had to approve that amount.

Goldstein and former Blink-182 drummer Travis Barker were the only survivors of the September 2008, which remains under investigation.

Terms of the settlement were not revealed and Goldstein's attorney, Brian Panish, did not immediately return a call seeking comment. The resolution was first reported Thursday by celebrity Web site TMZ.

No jail for star chef's ex in their NYC fight

NEW YORK (AP)—Todd English's former fiancee is headed for anger-management class after being charged with hitting the celebrity chef in the head with a metal wristwatch in New York City.

A New York judge agreed Thursday to close Erica Wang's assault case without prison time or probation if she completes the anger-management program and 10 hours of community service within a year. Police say Wang gave English a black eye during an argument Sept. 14. He needed seven stitches.

Wang's lawyer said she's "pleased but not surprised" at the court outcome. Representatives for English had no immediate comment.

English owns the Olives chain and has appeared on Bravo's "Top Chef." He called off the couple's Oct. 3 wedding shortly before the confrontation.

TV job swap ahead for Elisabeth and Tim Hasselbeck

NEW YORK (AP)—ABC says Elisabeth Hasselbeck, a co-host of "The View," is trading places for a day with her husband, ESPN football analyst Tim Hasselbeck.

Elisabeth will spend Tuesday afternoon at ESPN headquarters in Bristol, Conn. There, she will substitute for her husband on shows including "NFL Live" at 4 p.m. Eastern.

Then on Jan. 28, behind-the-scenes footage of her ESPN visit will air on "The View."

On that same broadcast, the job swap will conclude when Tim occupies his wife's chair alongside co-hosts Joy Behar (BAY'-har), Whoopi Goldberg, Sherri Shepherd and Barbara Walters.

In this Sept. 12, 2008 file photo, TV host Elisabeth Hasselbeck arrives to the US Weekly 25 Most Stylish New Yorkers party in New York.

AP

Singapore beauty queen turns condom pitchwoman

SINGAPORE (AP)—There's never been anything safe about ex-beauty queen Ris Low.

The former Singapore Miss World, who was stripped of her crown last year when a credit card fraud conviction was revealed, is back in the spotlight again, this time as a spokeswoman for condoms and safe sex.

Low, 20, first shot to fame in the city-state after bloggers criticized her English, and her slang inventions "Boomz" and "Shingz"—words even she admits defy clear definition—became national catchphrases.

Low has said bipolar disorder helped trigger a compulsion to steal since she was a child and led to last year's credit card fraud sentence of two years probation. Now Low is pitching for Espire condoms and preaching safe sex, moves she hopes will improve her image.

"From being infamous to something positive is actually a big change," Low said in an interview Thursday. "My image is becoming more positive and most people can see the change in me."

Low said her passion for the safe sex issue comes from knowing a friend who contracted the HIV virus six years ago at 15 and acquaintances who had unwanted pregnancies.

"They have to face that and all the criticism from the public," she said. "So I think that using safe sex and being responsible for your own actions is important."

Low said she grew up in a working-class neighborhood in west Singapore speaking Mandarin with her parents and the Chinese dialect Hokkien with her grandparents. While English, Mandarin, Malay and Tamil are the official languages, most Singaporeans speak 'Singlish,' a hybrid of English with Chinese sentence structures and words from Malay and Chinese dialects thrown in.

Singapore's former Miss World contestant Ris Low, who was stripped of her crown last year when a credit card fraud conviction was revealed, speaks as a condom spokeswoman at an event in Singapore, on Thursday Jan. 14, 2010.

AP

Class reunion kindles man's obsession with wife's past

By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

Dear Abby

DEAR ABBY: My wife, "Jana," and I have been married 15 years. She's the love of my life. I can't imagine living without her. We have three beautiful children, successful careers and a nice home. We have a great relationship, and I trust her completely.

Before we dated, Jana ran with a fast crowd. She was also somewhat promiscuous back then. Don't get me wrong, there are things from my past that I'm not proud of, either. But it bothers me that her "adventures" exceeded mine.

We went to Jana's class reunion last fall, and I met several friends from her past. Each guy I met, I couldn't help but wonder if he had slept with my wife. I know about some of her old boyfriends, but not all.

I think Jana knows this bothered me, but she doesn't know how much. I literally became nauseated thinking about her past. After almost 20 years of dating and marriage, I thought I'd be over it. Should I press her for more details or just live with the knots in my stomach?

CURIOUS GEORGE IN LOUISVILLE

DEAR GEORGE: Neither. After 20 years of dating and marriage, it's time to grow up. You have a happy, successful marriage—so why are you wasting time obsessing about the distant past? If you have digestive problems, discuss them with your doctor or a therapist. But to ask your wife for a scorecard at this late date will be counterproductive, and I doubt that it will fix what ails you. And in the future—skip the reunions.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I am a 12-year-old girl who attends a private middle school. When I go to school, I see girls my age wearing a little bit of makeup. When I try to sneak off to school with a little bit on my face, my parents wipe it off and say I'm beautiful just the way I am, although I disagree.

Abby, I will be 13 next month! I'm absolutely positive that I can handle makeup without going overboard. But when I say it to my parents, they still forbid me to wear or buy any. How do I convince them that I'm mature enough to handle this?

NOT IMMATURE IN NYC

DEAR NOT IMMATURE: Your parents regard you as their little girl and may be hoping to keep you that way for another year. One of the hallmarks of maturity is being honest with your parents. If you want to convince them that you're mature enough to handle makeup, perhaps you should consider not sneaking out of the house wearing any. Prove to them that you can be trusted, and they'll have faith in your judgment—and I'm not just talking about makeup.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I have been arguing with my husband over something, and I hope you can settle it once and for all. When he gets out of the shower, he leaves the curtain open. I prefer to keep it closed because I think it looks nicer to see a closed shower curtain in the bathroom.

My husband insists it should stay open to make sure the tub dries. I think the tub will dry regardless, since the air can flow over the curtain rod, and the curtain will become moldy if it's all scrunched up. Who is right?

STEAMY IN TEXAS

DEAR STEAMY: I did some checking, and was told by a major hotel chain that its housekeeping staff leaves the shower curtains pushed to the side (open) so air can flow through. However, those curtains are laundered frequently.

I also contacted the bed and bath department of a national department store chain, and the manager suggested leaving the curtain halfway open in the middle of the shower—open at both ends—to allow the air to circulate.

That may be a satisfying compromise to both of you.

Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Write Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To order "How to Write Letters for All Occasions," send a business-sized, self-addressed envelope, plus check or money order for $6 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Letter Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. (Postage is included in the price.)

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson

C'MON, HOBBES. WE'D BETTER GO FIND MY DUPLICATE BEFORE HE GETS ME IN TROUBLE.
I'M TELLING YOU, LADY, YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG GUY! I'M A DUPLICATE OF CALVIN! CALVIN'S IN HIS ROOM!
WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT. GIVE ME YOUR COAT.
SEE, CALVIN? THERE'S NO ONE HERE. NOW THAT'S ENOUGH GAMES. CLEAN YOUR ROOM, OK?
CALVIN?
I DON'T SEE HIM, HOBBES. MAYBE HE'S OUTSIDE, HUH?
WE'D BETTER HURRY. I THINK I HEAR YOUR MOM COMING DOWN THE STAIRS.
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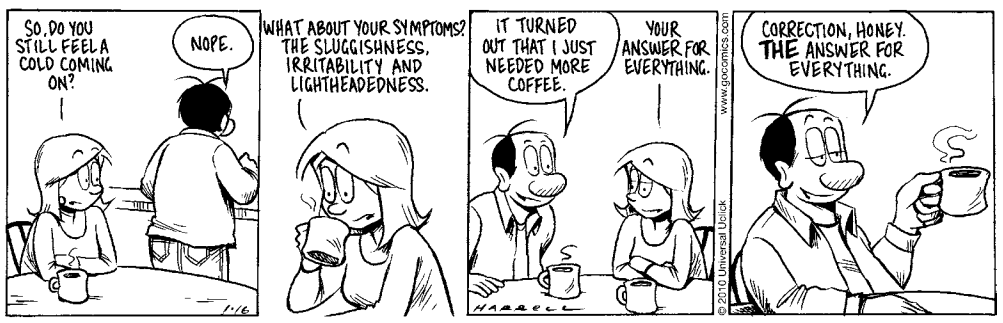
Garfield®

By Jim Davis

Adam@home

By Bryan Basset


SO, DO YOU STILL FEEL A COLD COMING ON?
NOPE.
WHAT ABOUT YOUR SYMPTOMS? THE SLUGGISHNESS, IRRITABILITY AND LIGHTHEADEDNESS.
IT TURNED OUT THAT I JUST NEEDED MORE COFFEE.
YOUR ANSWER FOR EVERYTHING.
CORRECTION, HONEY. THE ANSWER FOR EVERYTHING.
www.gocomics.com
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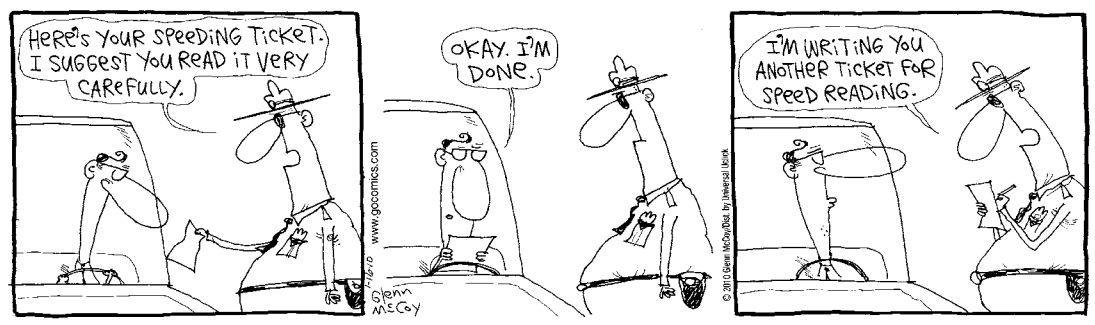
The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy


HERE'S YOUR SPEEDING TICKET. I SUGGEST YOU READ IT VERY CAREFULLY.
OKAY. I'M DONE.
I'M WRITING YOU ANOTHER TICKET FOR SPEED READING.
www.gocomics.com
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CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

ACROSS

1 Buy stuff
5 Present
9 Watch chain
12 Manger visitors
13 Teensy bit
14 Caustic solution
15 Addict
16 Waikiki wingding
17 Still, in verse
18 "Take — Train"
19 Energy
20 Satch-mo's specialty
21 Cravat
23 Comic Philips
25 Extraterrestrials
28 Buck
32 Perfume
33 At hand
34 Month after Elul
36 Beat
37 "— Impossible"
38 Scull need
39 Leave out
42 Felon's flight
44 Elevator man
48 Height of fashion?
49 Long story
50 Asian desert
51 Ortiz of "Ugly Betty"
52 Aware of
53 Eastern potentate
54 Mid-May honoree
55 Nervous
56 Cincinnati squad

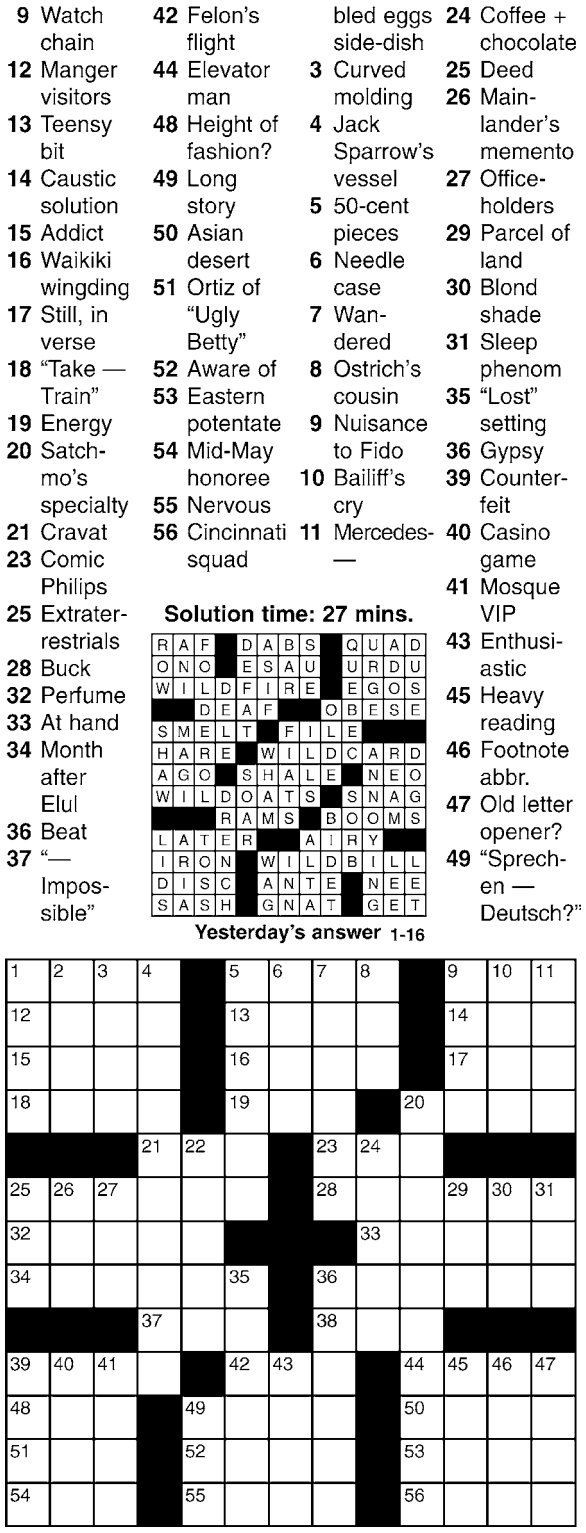
DOWN

1 Blue material?
2 Scrambled eggs side-dish
3 Curved molding
4 Jack Sparrow's vessel
5 50-cent pieces
6 Needle case
7 Wandered
8 Ostrich's cousin
9 Nuisance to Fido
10 Bailiff's cry
11 Mercedes-—
20 4-Down's flag
22 Motionless
24 Coffee + chocolate
25 Deed
26 Mainlander's memento
27 Office-holders
29 Parcel of land
30 Blond shade
31 Sleep phenom
35 "Lost" setting
36 Gypsy
39 Counterfeit
40 Casino game
41 Mosque VIP
43 Enthusiastic
45 Heavy reading
46 Footnote abbr.
47 Old letter opener?
49 "Sprechen — Deutsch?"

Solution time: 27 mins.

R	A	F		D	A	B	S		Q	U	A	D
O	N	O		E	S	A	U		U	R	D	U
W	I	L	D	F	I	R	E		E	G	O	S
		D	E	A	F			O	B	E	S	E
S	M	E	L	T		F	I	L	E			
H	A	R	E		W	I	L	D	C	A	R	D
A	G	O		S	H	A	L	E		N	E	O
W	I	L	D	O	A	T	S		S	N	A	G
			R	A	M	S		B	O	O	M	S
L	A	T	E	R			A	I	R	Y		
I	R	O	N		W	I	L	D	B	I	L	L
D	I	S	C		A	N	T	E		N	E	E
S	A	S	H		G	N	A	T		G	E	T

Yesterday's answer 1-16



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Mason Gamble, 24; Kate Moss, 36; Debbie Allen, 60; John Carpenter, 62

Happy Birthday: You'll be a little afraid to take an unknown path and unsure you should continue down the one you have been on forever. You must answer these questions so you can accept change and take greater strides in the future. You will continue to have to deal with rules that don't sit well with you, but the lessons learned will be valuable in the future. Your numbers are 4, 5, 17, 26, 29, 34, 41

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Call upon people you have helped in the past and build an alliance that will help you weather any storm you face. A change in your career plans may be daunting at first but hard work and dedication will lead to bigger and better results. ✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Deal with any unfortunate situations head-on. Speak your mind and clear the air. Love and romance will take your mind off any disappointment you have suffered. ✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Problems with pending settlements, legal or financial matters or health issues will cause some grief. Gather information that will help you get past any burden you face. Join a support group or a cause you believe in. ✪✪✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Stabilize your personal life. A financial change can be made if you budget wisely or size down to a more affordable lifestyle. Consider what you need and what you don't to be happy. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): You may as well face the music. If you try to avoid a personal matter that arises you will be reminded of your obligations. Don't let emotional manipulation be the reason you take care of matters. Do so because it's the right thing to do. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Home and family matters will have to be taken care of before you can enjoy your day. A love relationship can be enhanced if you make special plans for two or, if you are single, you attend events conducive to meeting other people looking for love. ✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Distance yourself from any family problems that will tie you down or leave you responsible for everyone else's well-being. Get out with friends, do something creative or enhance your appeal to feel good about yourself. ✪✪✪✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Get away for the day or take time out to spend with someone you really love. A trip or something you enjoy and can learn from will revitalize you and bring you greater vision. Follow through with your personal plans. ✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): Don't wait for someone to make a move. Rise to the occasion. Someone from your past can make a big difference in your life. Travel and experiencing different cultures will enlighten you. ✪✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): You have plenty to deal with that may be the result of a mistake you made a long time ago. Stop waffling about the way to handle the situation and do something about it. You must end old conditions to begin new ones. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): Stabilize your personal and your financial future. Set up a new budget and take care of any responsibilities. Show friends and family that you are not only willing to change but capable of doing so as well. ✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): You can't possibly keep up with what everyone is doing and a surprise is likely in the works. Don't pry. A serious commitment will enable you to form a strong alliance with a group that can help you with your goals. ✪✪✪

Birthday Baby: You will find a practical way to deal with any problem you face. You have a compassionate nature and a strong sense of justice.

Eugenia's Web sites: ***eugenialast.com*** *for confidential consultations,* ***myspace.com/eugenialast*** *for Eugenia's blog,* ***astroadvice.com*** *for fun*

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

			5		9			
9		4		1		7		3
	1						4	
5								4
	3			8			9	
2								6
	5						7	
3		6		2		8		9
			8		3			

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/16

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	9	7	1	5	8	2	3	4
1	4	3	2	6	9	8	5	7
2	5	8	4	3	7	9	1	6
5	8	6	7	2	1	4	9	3
9	2	4	3	8	5	6	7	1
7	3	1	6	9	4	5	2	8
4	1	5	8	7	2	3	6	9
8	6	9	5	1	3	7	4	2
3	7	2	9	4	6	1	8	5

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/15

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally, even backward. Find them and **CIRCLE THEIR LETTERS ONLY. DO NOT CIRCLE THE WORD.** The leftover letters spell the Wonderword.

BREATH FRESHENERS **Solution: 7 letters**

L	C	E	C	E	B	O	N	B	O	N	G	M	S	S
C	L	O	T	R	U	N	E	P	O	R	D	U	Y	P
F	O	Y	A	S	U	G	A	R	E	N	P	G	S	R
L	J	N	H	T	A	T	N	E	T	P	N	I	T	A
A	D	U	F	P	E	P	N	O	L	A	R	I	E	Y
V	G	S	I	E	O	D	H	Y	T	C	M	I	N	T
O	N	S	W	C	C	R	I	T	E	E	T	H	I	O
R	O	S	K	A	Y	T	O	S	O	B	H	Ⓢ	C	D
T	R	E	T	W	L	D	I	L	S	O	L	Ⓜ	I	O
A	T	N	H	S	I	L	O	O	H	O	T	Ⓤ	D	R
B	S	I	U	U	R	A	O	T	N	C	L	Ⓖ	E	H
L	T	C	Q	B	R	U	U	W	A	A	H	V	M	S
E	K	I	E	O	I	O	B	N	R	S	I	E	E	U
T	L	E	M	N	M	T	D	O	A	V	T	L	W	R
T	S	A	L	B	T	Y	E	W	E	Z	E	E	R	B

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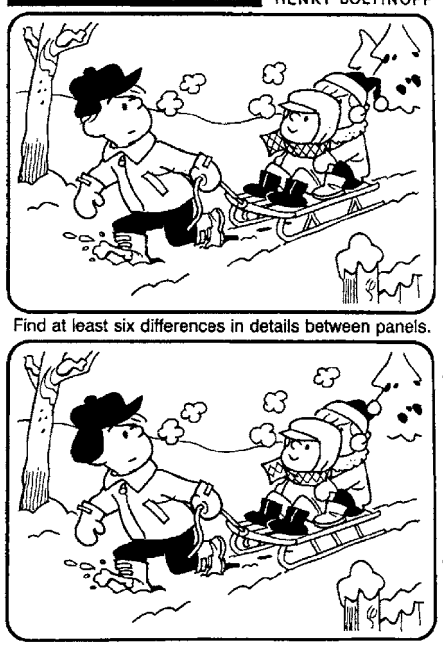
Aroma, Bite, Blast, Blue, Bonbon, Brand, Breeze, Brush, Burst, Candy, Chew, Chlorophyll, Clean, Coated, Confection, Cool, Crisp, Dissolve, Drop, Flavor, Green, Gums, Iciness, Juicy, Liquid, Medicine, Melt, Mint, Mouth, Odor, Oral, Pocket, Revive, Scent, Spray, Strong, Suck, Sugar, Supply, Swallow, Sweet, Tablet, Tangy, Taste, Teeth, Time, Tongue, Toothpaste, Wash, White

Yesterday's Answer: Sentences

NEW FROM WONDERWORD! The Wonderword 2010 Desk Calendar is now available for pre-order on Amazon.com and Calendars.com. Search: "Wonderword Calendar." Order yours today!

HOCUS-FOCUS

BY HENRY BOLTINOFF



Find at least six differences in details between panels.

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Differences: 1. Tree is missing. 2. Earflap is longer. 3. Hat tassel is missing. 4. Breath "puff" is added. 5. Sled runner is different. 6. Scarf pattern is different.

Wishing Well®

2	3	4	5	3	8	4	3	4	2	3	2	3
O	E	A	L	N	P	P	J	P	L	O	D	Y
2	7	4	7	5	3	4	2	7	5	8	2	8
L	B	L	E	I	P	A	O	G	F	R	V	A
5	7	3	4	2	7	8	4	3	5	2	4	6
E	R	L	U	E	A	C	S	E	W	R	E	Y
2	4	6	5	4	3	5	2	8	6	3	8	5
E	F	O	I	O	A	T	T	T	U	S	I	H
2	5	6	4	3	6	3	7	8	5	6	7	3
U	F	A	R	U	R	R	C	C	E	E	I	E
8	4	3	2	5	6	8	7	5	8	4	8	2
E	Y	S	R	R	S	F	O	V	A	O	I	N
6	2	6	8	4	5	8	6	5	7	6	7	6
E	S	C	T	U	O	H	U	R	U	R	S	E

HERE IS A PLEASANT LITTLE GAME that will give you a message every day. It's a numerical puzzle designed to spell out your fortune. Count the letters in your first name. If the number of letters is 6 or more, subtract 4. If the number is less than 6, add 3. The result is your key number. Start at the upper left-hand corner and check one of your key numbers, left to right. Then read the message the letters under the checked figures give you.

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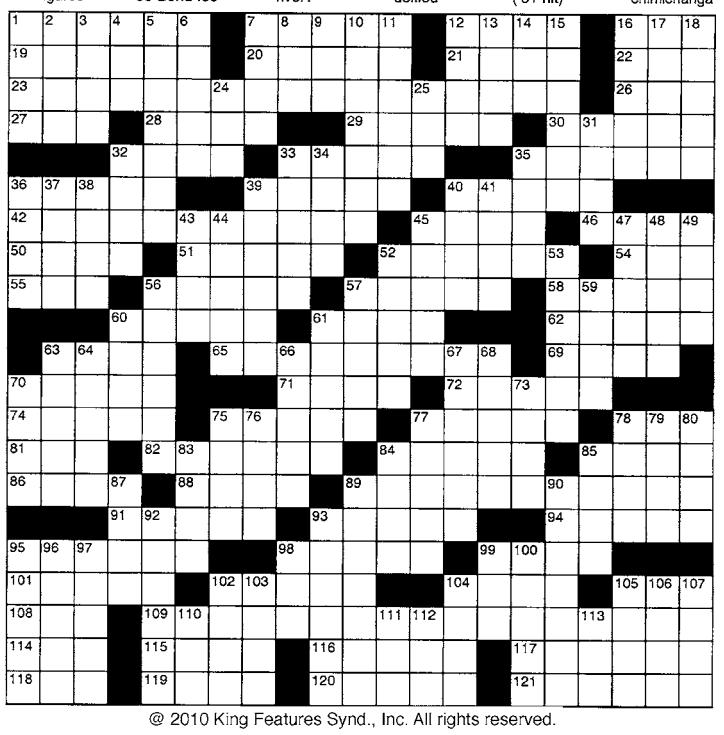
Super Crossword HELLISH-TOSIS

ACROSS

1 Toady
7 Pants
12 "— Strawberries" ('57 film)
16 Diner order
19 Anti-knock stuff
20 Kayak commander
21 Racer Luyendyk
22 Ipanema's locale
23 Riddle: Part 1
26 "A mouse!"
27 Deli delicacy
28 Insignificant
29 Like Yale's walls
30 Practice
32 Swimmer Spitz
33 Spud
35 Keen insight
36 Fall behind
39 "Paradise Lost" figure
40 Top-drawer
42 Ring site?
45 Parched
46 Freighter or ferry
50 In the thick of
51 Get the better of
52 Folklore figures
54 Nationality suffix
55 "Baloney!"
56 Eye opener?
57 Respond to 56 Across
58 Berry of "Monster's Ball"
60 Fern feature
61 Primer pooch
62 "Enigma Variations" composer
63 Barrett or Jaffe
65 Riddle: Part 2
69 Wander
70 Songlike
71 — Patrick Harris
72 Offer an apple?
74 Writer Wharton
75 Quoted an expert
77 Winter warmer-upper
78 Not many
81 Classic beginning
82 Napoleon's cousin
84 Icing flavor
85 Gdansk denizen
86 Bond foe
88 Sheldon's "— of Angels"
89 Clutches, e.g.
91 — acid
93 Stubborn
94 Small bay
95 Amulet motif
98 Perk up
99 Unclear
101 Butcher-shop buy
102 Serengeti sahib
104 "David Copperfield" character
105 Fleur-de- —
108 Prior to, to Prior
109 Answer to riddle
114 Corsage fastener
115 Israeli diplomat
116 Novelist Shute
117 Prophet
118 Soho snack
119 Worf's portrayer
120 Literary land
121 Update a story

DOWN

1 Cry of distress
2 Return address?
3 Very low river?
4 Beyond balmy
5 Aberration
6 When Adam was a boy
7 Go fish. e.g.
8 Lofty peak
9 — whale
10 Cromwell, for one
11 Bauer or Bochco
12 Ebb
13 Incensed
14 Fool with the facts
15 Remove
16 Lutenist Julian
17 Feudal figure
18 Symbol
24 Neighbor of Miss.
25 Salutation word
31 Takes to court
32 Temperate
33 Ryan's daughter
34 Perched on
35 — -de-camp
36 It'll give you a lift
37 San —, Italy
38 Got off
39 Audiophile's equipment
40 Desire deified
41 Lifesaver flavor
43 Type of machete
44 Render defenseless
45 Ekberg or Bryant
47 Hagar the Horrible's wife
48 Cairo creed
49 Ibsen's "— Gynt"
52 Snarl
53 Trekkers' guide
56 Certain helicopter
57 Plant pest
59 "Thanks —!"
60 Tizzy
61 Take the reins
63 Winona of "Mr. Deeds"
64 Heavenly hunter
66 Remove a ribbon
67 Thickset
68 Anne of "John Q."
70 Be a banker
73 Ditch under a drawbridge
75 Family
76 Othello's inducer
77 Arrogant
78 "— #1" ('61 hit)
79 Actress Sommer
80 Singer Dottie
83 Baby's bed
84 Gangster's gal
85 Liqueur glass
87 Galley features
89 Idle talk
90 Odd
92 Tangled
93 Bite for Bonzo
95 Tidied the terrace
96 French physicist
97 Stadium
98 Stadium shout
99 Torrid
100 Shady spot
102 Grumpy guy
103 "The Perfect Fool"
104 "What's My Line?" host
105 Lingerie trim
106 "— never happen!"
107 Cartoonist Silverstein
110 Cable channel
111 Actress Le Gallienne
112 Overalls feature
113 Chomp on a chimichanga



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Trivia test by Fifi Rodriguez

1. U.S. STATES: What is the highest capital city in the United States?
2. SLOGANS: What was Woodsy Owl's message from the federal government?
3. RELIGION: When is Maundy Thursday in the Christian religion?
4. MUSIC: What entertainer has been called "The Man from Memphis"?
5. DISCOVERIES: Who is credited with discovering streptomycin?
6. U.S. PRESIDENTS: Which president had a pet badger?
7. MATH: What is the decimal equivalent of the fraction one-third?
8. MOVIES: What film features the theme park "Walley World"?
9. GEOGRAPHY: Where is the Lombardy region?
10. GENERAL KNOWLEDGE: What does a sphygmomanometer measure?

Answers

1. Santa Fe, N.M. (7,000 feet above sea level)
2. "Give a hoot, don't pollute!"
3. Thursday before Easter, marking the Last Supper
4. Elvis Presley
5. Selman A. Waksman
6. Theodore Roosevelt ("Josiah")
7. .3333
8. "National Lampoon's Vacation"
9. Northern Italy
10. Blood pressure

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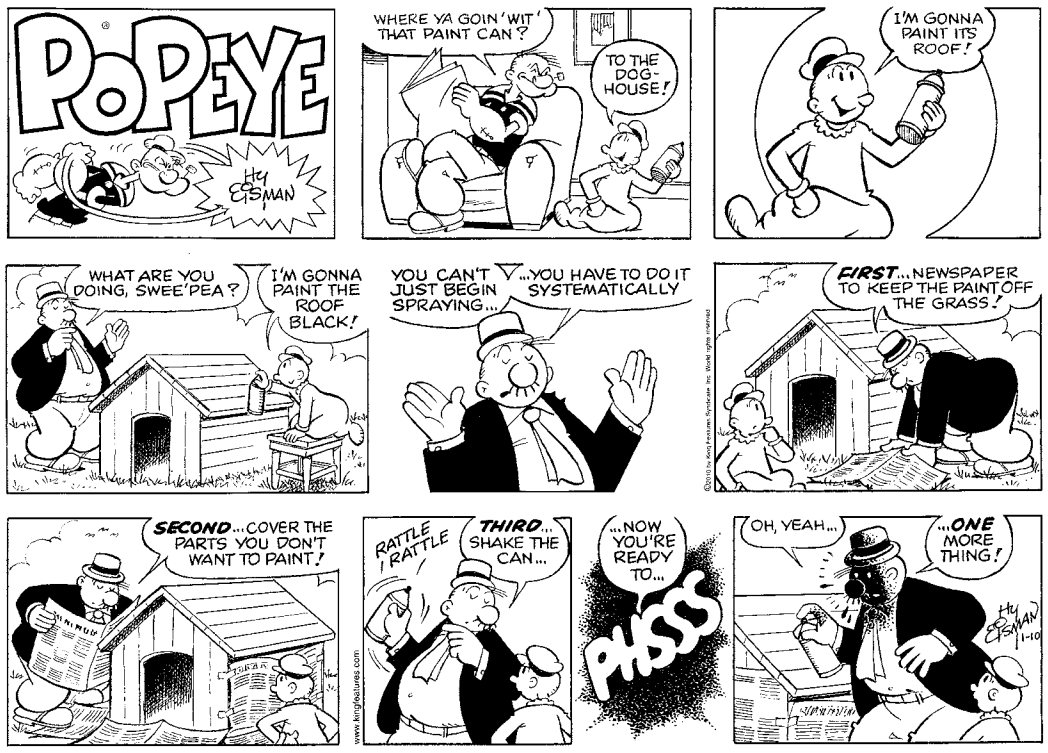
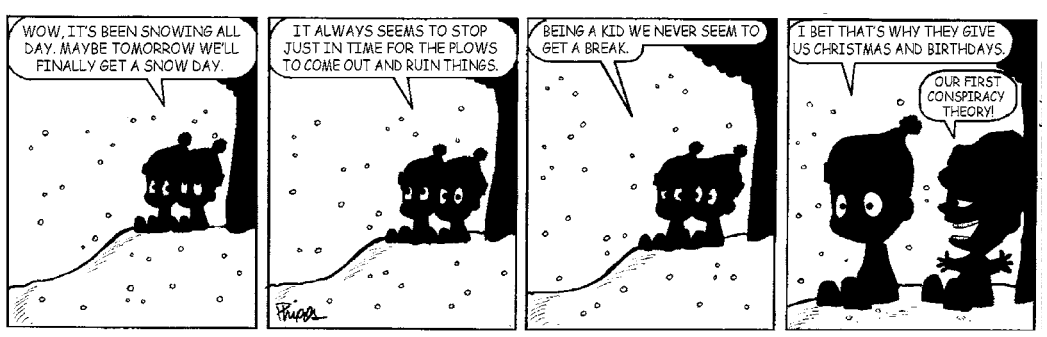
Saturday's Answers

POPEYE


HEY EISMAN
WHERE YA GOIN' WIT' THAT PAINT CAN?
TO THE DOG-HOUSE!
I'M GONNA PAINT ITS ROOF!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING, SWEE'PEA?
I'M GONNA PAINT THE ROOF BLACK!
YOU CAN'T JUST BEGIN SPRAYING...
...YOU HAVE TO DO IT SYSTEMATICALLY
FIRST... NEWSPAPER TO KEEP THE PAINT OFF THE GRASS!
SECOND... COVER THE PARTS YOU DON'T WANT TO PAINT!
RATTLE 'RATTLE
THIRD... SHAKE THE CAN...
...NOW YOU'RE READY TO...
PHSSS
OH, YEAH...
...ONE MORE THING!
HEY EISMAN 1-10
www.kingfeatures.com

Amber Waves

by Dave T. Phipps


WOW, IT'S BEEN SNOWING ALL DAY. MAYBE TOMORROW WE'LL FINALLY GET A SNOW DAY.
IT ALWAYS SEEMS TO STOP JUST IN TIME FOR THE PLOWS TO COME OUT AND RUIN THINGS.
BEING A KID WE NEVER SEEM TO GET A BREAK.
I BET THAT'S WHY THEY GIVE US CHRISTMAS AND BIRTHDAYS.
OUR FIRST CONSPIRACY THEORY!
PHIPPS

The Spats

by Jeff Pickering

GRANDMA, HOW OLD ARE YOU?
THIRTY NINE AND A FEW MONTHS.
WOW!!
A FEW "HUNDRED" MONTHS... BUT WHO'S COUNTING
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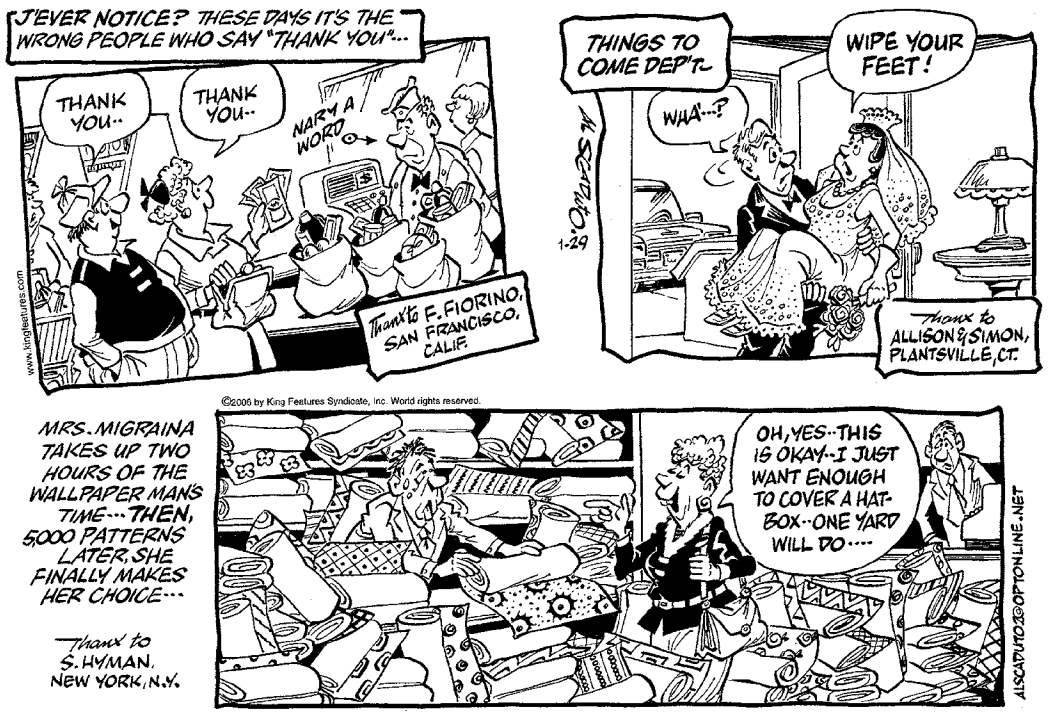
They'll Do It Every Time

by Al Scaduto


J'EVER NOTICE? THESE DAYS IT'S THE WRONG PEOPLE WHO SAY "THANK YOU"...
THANK YOU..
THANK YOU..
NARY A WORD
Thanx to F. FIORINO, SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF.
www.kingfeatures.com
THINGS TO COME DEP'T.
WIPE YOUR FEET!
WHA'...?
1-29
Thanx to ALLISON & SIMON, PLANTSVILLE, CT.
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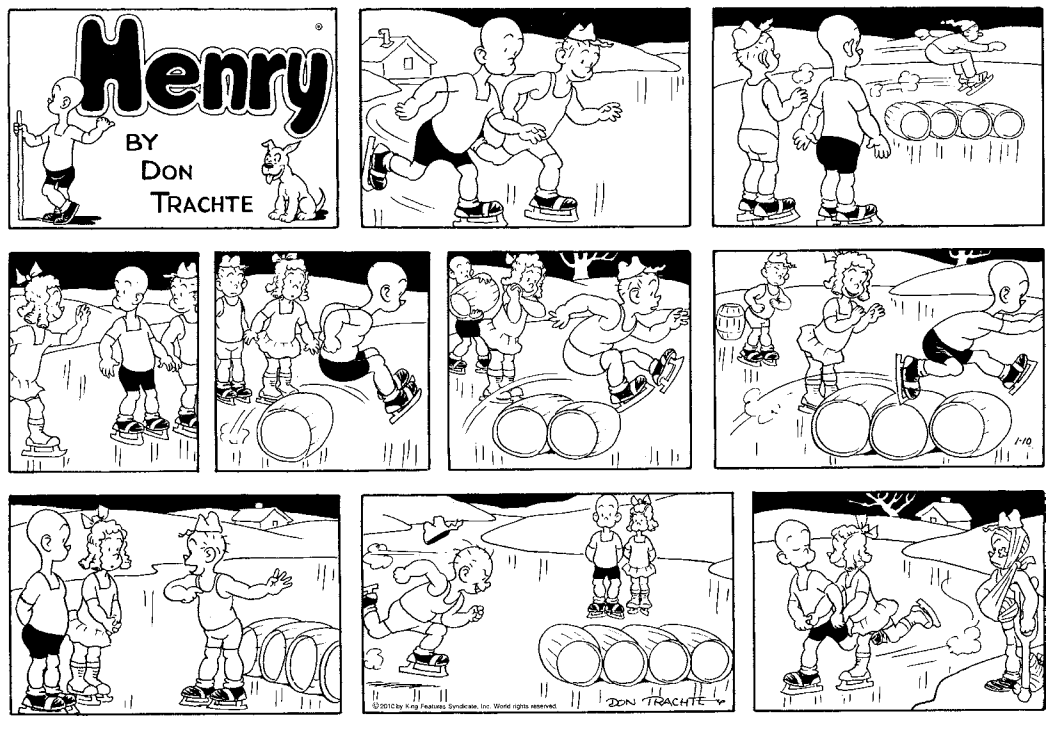
Thanx to S. HYMAN, NEW YORK, N.Y.
OH, YES.. THIS IS OKAY.. I JUST WANT ENOUGH TO COVER A HAT-BOX.. ONE YARD WILL DO....
ALSCADUTO@OPTONLINE.NET

Henry

BY DON TRACHTE



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By HAIDEE V. EUGENIO
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Find today's solution in this section

Rookie's 3-pointer at buzzer lifts Jazz over Cavs

SALT LAKE CITY (AP)—Rookie Sundiata Gaines hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer to end a frenzied series of comebacks and give the Utah Jazz a 97-96 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Thursday night.

LeBron James had led the Cavaliers on a 22-4 run earlier in the fourth quarter and put the Cavs up by six points with 32.5 seconds left, but Cleveland couldn't clinch it from the free throw line.

Zydrunas Ilgauskas went 1-of-2 from the line with 5.6 seconds left and the Jazz needed only a field goal to tie it or 3-pointer to win it.

Utah's Ronnie Price got tied up behind the arc and flipped the ball to Gaines, who launched the game-winner.

Gaines, signed to a 10-day contract when starter Deron Williams sprained his right wrist, finished with nine points. It was Gaines' first 3-pointer in his five-game NBA career.

James led Cleveland with 36 points, scoring 20 in the fourth quarter.

The Jazz and Cavs combined for just 28 points in the third quarter, then both went on a scoring barrage in the fourth. Utah ended up winning the fourth-quarter battle 42-36 as Carlos Boozer scored 11 in the final period. Boozer finished with 19 points, 13 rebounds and six assists against his former team.

The Cavs helped the Jazz by committing a season-high 23 turnovers and missing critical foul shots in the final minute after James had regained the lead for Cleveland.

Anthony Parker went 1-of-2 from the line on consecutive trips in the final 22 seconds, leaving the door open for Utah's comeback.

Kyle Korver hit a baseline jumper to cut the lead to 94-92 with 6 seconds left, then after a quick foul, Ilgauskas was 1-of-2 and Utah got the rebound.

After a timeout, the Cavs had the Jazz scrambling on the final inbounds play before Price got the ball to Gaines on the right wing and Gaines came through. He was mobbed by his teammates on the spot, then ran across to the scorer's table where he leaped on top and lifted his arms.

Gaines was in the game because Williams re-injured his right wrist, which he sprained in a fall last Monday.

AP

Utah Jazz guard Sundiata Gaines (15) drives around Cleveland Cavaliers guard Mo Williams (2) during the second half of their NBA basketball game Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010, in Salt Lake City.

The Jazz responded to losing their leader with 15 straight points to start a 21-2 run that had the Cavs all but done until James put on another show for the arena that was packed just to see him.

James led the Cavs on an 11-1 run to get back in it late in the fourth. He drew a foul on Boozer while making a layup and his free throw for the three-point play got Cleveland within 84-82 with 2:16 left.

James was fouled again on a drive with 1:15 left and appeared to injure his left ankle on the play. He was hopping on his right foot after the whistle. The hop was gone after a timeout and James went to the line, where he made the first but missed the second. James got his own rebound and hit a 3-pointer to put Cleveland back up 86-85 with 1:10 left.

The Cavs came up with a turnover at the other end and James hit another 3-pointer with 40 seconds left, giving Cleveland an 89-85 lead.

C.J. Miles tried a 3-pointer for Utah, but it bounced off the rim to James, who drew Boozer's sixth foul and made both free throws to put Cleveland up 91-85 with 32.5 seconds to go.

Parker and Delonte West scored 11 points apiece and Mo Williams and Jawad Williams both had 10 for Cleveland.

Mehmet Okur and Priced added 13 points each for Utah, which won despite shooting 41 percent.

Bulls 96, Celtics 83

In Boston, Chicago got a rare road win at one of the most challenging venues, downing Boston.

Luol Deng scored 25 points to lead Chicago to a third straight win.

The Celtics got within six poitns with 3:50 left, but the Bulls scored eight of the next nine points, six by Joakim Noah, to build the lead to 94-81.

Paul Pierce scored 20 points and Rajon Rondo added 15 for the Celtics, playing their fourth game in five nights. The loss dropped them to 11-6 at home after they went 35-6 there in each of the past two seasons.

The Bulls won for only the second time in their last 12 road contests as they began a stretch of 10 of 12 games away from home.

Derrick Rose scored 17 points for the Bulls, while Noah had his 19th double-double of the season with 15 points and 11 rebounds.

NBA's Arenas charged with felony gun possession

WASHINGTON (AP)—Gilbert Arenas has a court date and an apparent plea deal is in place, signaling a possible quick resolution to at least one side of a guns-in-the-locker-room confrontation that stained the NBA and jeopardized the career of the three-time All-Star.

Arenas was charged Thursday with felony gun possession—one count of carrying a pistol without a license—a crime that carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison. The charges were filed in D.C. Superior Court in an "information," a document that indicates a plea bargain has been reached.

The charge came directly from prosecutors and not in the form of an indictment—even though a grand jury has been investigating—and Arenas was listed on the docket for a court appearance Friday afternoon.

Arenas has acknowledged storing four unloaded guns in his locker at the Verizon Center, saying he wanted to keep them away from his young children and didn't know it was a violation of the city's strict gun laws. He says he took them out of the locker Dec. 21 in a "misguided effort to play a joke" on a teammate.

The criminal charge came on the same day that the teammate, Javaris Crittenton, had his northern Virginia apartment searched by police looking for a silver- or chrome-colored semiautomatic handgun with a black handle. The search warrant indicated police were investigating crimes that include brandishing a weapon. No evidence was seized, according to court documents, and Crittenton has not been charged.

Two league officials have said a spat between Arenas and Crittenton began Dec. 19 while players were playing cards and gambling on the team plane during a flight home from a West Coast road trip. Their dispute became heated when the team reconvened for practice two days later. There have been conflicting published accounts as to whether Crittenton had a gun and whether he drew it on Arenas.

Arenas' lawyer, Crittenton's lawyer and the NBA had no immediate comment on the criminal charge. Crittenton has previously said he did nothing wrong, and his agent, Mark Bartelstein, said his client was there during the apartment search.

"It went as smooth as it could have gone," Bartelstein said.

Even if Arenas avoids a jail sentence, the outcome of the legal process will have profound implications on his future in the NBA and specifically with the Wizards. Possession of a gun at an NBA arena is a violation of the league's collective bargaining agreement, and last week commissioner David Stern suspended Arenas indefinitely without pay pending the outcome of the investigation.

Stern was particularly upset that Arenas repeatedly joked about the matter with reporters and on Twitter and even pantomimed shooting teammates in a pregame huddle before a game at Philadelphia. Arenas attempted, in public at least, to use a "goof ball" defense, saying he meant no harm and never takes anything seriously. Stern, however, said that Arenas was "not currently fit to take the court" and that the 28-year-old player's conduct will "ultimately result in a substantial suspension, and perhaps worse."

In addition, the Wizards could attempt to invoke the morals clause found in standard NBA contracts and void the remainder of the six-year, $111 million deal Arenas signed in summer 2008. The players' union would almost certainly contest such a move.

"We will continue to lend our full support to Gilbert and will assist him in every way possible to see this matter through," union executive director Billy Hunter said.

Arenas has played in only 34 games since signing the contract because of a knee injury and the gun-related suspension.

Arenas was averaging 22.6 points and 7.2 assists this season for the Wizards, who are 12-25 and in last place in the NBA's Southeast Division. The team has removed nearly all traces of the once-marketable "Agent Zero" from the Verizon Center, including Arenas merchandise with the jersey No. 0 and a huge banner with his photo.

The case has proved a major distraction for a troubled team. At least seven Wizards players and coach Flip Saunders have appeared before a grand jury or been questioned by authorities, leaving the team without enough players to hold a regular practice on some days. Arenas has been told to stay away from team functions during his suspension, and Crittenton, who has not played this season because of a foot injury, has been excused by the team while the legal process plays out.

"We are aware of the charge filed against Gilbert Arenas today and will continue to follow the ongoing legal process very carefully," the Wizards said in a statement. "We will also continue to cooperate fully with the proper authorities and the NBA."

Six-way tie for early lead at Sony Open

HONOLULU (AP)—Six players were tied for the lead after Thursday's opening day at the Sony Open—the first full-field event of the U.S. PGA Tour season.

Among the joint leaders at 5-under 65 were Davis Love III, who has not played a tournament in two months, Robert Allenby, who probably should not have played at all with a twisted ankle, and Troy Merritt, in his first PGA Tour appearance.

John Merrick, defending champion Zach Johnson and Ryan Palmer were the others atop the leaderboard. Palmer read about Johnson's belief in the 'one-day-at-a-time' psychological approach to golf in the tournament program while looking for something to read, and it inspired him.

Just one stroke back from the leading six were another 10 players who shot 66s.

It was a surprisingly strong performance by the field on a day when the wind was so strong that Masters champion Angel Cabrera, among those at 66, reached the 498-yard ninth hole with a wedge, and Pat Perez hit a 7-iron out of the rough from 210 yards on the opening hole.

The round was almost completed. Tom Gillis had a 25-foot eagle putt on his final hole when he decided it was too dark to continue. He will return Friday morning to putt, then start his second round.

It ended what was a peculiar start to the PGA's full-field season.

Davis Love III follows his drive off the first tee during the first round of the Sony Open golf tournament, Thursday, Jan. 14, 2010, in Honolulu.

AP

Love had spent recent months hitting balls into a net in his garage due to the American winter chill, or in Idaho on vacation. Eager for some on-course practice, Love raced from his hotel after checking in Saturday, and went to the 11th green where he putted until he could no longer see the hole.

He was rewarded Thursday with a bogey-free round.

"I was optimistic," Love said. "But I was anxious about competing. Once I got it going, once I got under par ... I've been out here a long time. You don't forget."

Merritt's pure shots and timely putting meant he outperformed his pre-round ambitions, in which he declared he'd be thrilled with a 67 on his debut appearance.

"Things went way better than I thought," Merritt said.

Allenby was the only player at Waialae who arrived with a winning streak. He won in the Nedbank Challenge, then the Australian PGA, and was going for a walk with his wife, Sandy, when he took a bad step off a curb and twisted his ankle.

The Australian wasn't sure he could play and might have left any other tournament. Then again, he flew 12 hours from Florida and didn't much feel like turning around.

"And the weather is better," Allenby said.

He played gingerly on the taped right ankle and had difficulty hitting a fade. That didn't keep him from firing a 4-iron at the flag on the tough par-3 fourth for a birdie.

"My putting was the best part of the day," Allenby said. "I did hit some good shots, but my putting was good. It's the same as I left off last year."

Beltran, Mets bicker over surgery

NEW YORK (AP)—Carlos Beltran says the New York Mets made their request to delay knee surgery only after the operation was underway.

A day after his right knee was repaired, the All-Star center fielder contradicted the claims of team officials who said they asked him to delay surgery while the club's medical staff evaluated his condition.

"I have done nothing but follow the directions of my doctors. Any accusations that I ignored or defied the team's wishes are simply false," Beltran said in a statement released Thursday by his agent, Scott Boras.

"No one from the team raised any issue until Wednesday, after I was already in surgery," Beltran said. "I do not know what else I could have done."

Boras claims Mets medical director Dr. David Altchek and trainer Ray Ramirez approved the surgery on Tuesday. Boras said chief operating officer Jeff Wilpon asked for the delay on Wednesday morning, when Dr. Richard Steadman already was removing cartilage fragments and inflammation, and shaving bone spurs.

"The Mets had notice of the surgery on Wednesday because their physician was informed, Dr. Altchek, by Dr. Steadman," Boras said. "The Mets had notice when their trainer was informed by Dr. Steadman's office, and he also approved the surgery. Carlos Beltran informed (general manager) Omar Minaya of it through a conversation on late Tuesday afternoon."

Many have questioned what kind of operation the Mets and their medical staff are running. So much for New York heading to spring training without controversy following a dismal initial season at Citi Field.

Assistant general manager John Ricco said Beltran had permission to be examined Tuesday by Steadman, a knee specialist in Colorado who also looked at Beltran last summer. Steadman recommended surgery.

"We told the agent for the player that we wanted to have the ability to discuss the diagnosis and possibly have a third opinion because, you know, of the nature of this injury," Ricco said during a telephone conference call. "We wanted to have the opportunity to digest the information, the diagnosis, and unfortunately we were never afforded the opportunity to do that."

Ricco said the Mets' request to Boras to delay surgery was made Tuesday evening. Beltran had a different view.

"Dr. Altchek agreed with Dr. Steadman's diagnosis that I needed surgery, and said he would relay his approval to Mets management," Beltran said.

The team doesn't expect Beltran to resume baseball activities for 12 weeks - although Boras said it could be as few as eight. Ricco said the team will be "losing his services, at least for the early part of the season."

Boras said Beltran didn't need permission from the Mets because it wasn't elective surgery and said Ramirez provided the necessary insurance paperwork.

"We thought we had cooperation from their side," Ricco said. "And to find out afterward that, you know, the surgery occurred, that's where we're most upset."

Thus far, the Mets have stopped short of taking action against Beltran for going ahead with the operation. He is entering the sixth season of a $119 million, seven-year contract.

"We sent a letter to the agent reserving our rights," Ricco said. "And that's where it stands right now."

The Mets contacted lawyers in the labor relations division of the commissioner's office but have few options. They could withhold Beltran's pay while he is on the disabled list, which would risk allowing him to become a free agent if the team loses a dispute, or to attempt to void the guarantee language in his contract.

"We're investigating it," players' association assistant general counsel Jeff Fannell said. "Just based on the facts as we understand them to be, the Mets have no basis to assert a claim against Carlos Beltran that he violated his contract."

Ricco spoke on the conference call because Minaya and Wilpon were at the major league owners' meetings in Arizona.

"When you have a player of this magnitude, you have an injury that could keep him out for a substantial period of time, you know, our view of it was that we want to make sure we have all the information that we can have at the time before we go forward," Ricco said. "Obviously, both the Mets' and Carlos Beltran's interest in this is Carlos Beltran's health and having him be healthy and productive for the Mets."

A five-time All-Star, Beltran missed 2 1/2 months last season with a painful bone bruise on his right knee. The switch-hitter finished with a team-leading .325 batting average and .415 on-base percentage. He had 10 homers and 48 RBIs.

Beltran, who turns 33 in April, had an MRI exam near the end of last season, another one in November and a third on Dec. 10. The third screening showed worsening of an underlying condition in his right knee called osteoarthritis.

MLB BRIEFS

AP source: Tigers, Valverde agree to 2-year deal

The Detroit Tigers have found their closer. Jose Valverde and the Tigers reached a preliminary agreement on a $14 million, two-year contract, according to a person familiar with the negotiations. The person, who spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity Thursday night because the team hadn't made an announcement, said the deal includes a $9 million option for 2012 and is subject to a physical. Valverde saved 25 games in 29 chances for Houston last season, then filed for free agency. He was 4-2 with a 2.33 ERA in 52 appearances. Before that, the right-hander led the NL in saves in consecutive seasons. He had 47 with Arizona in 2007 and 44 for the Astros in 2008. Detroit desperately needed a closer after choosing not to re-sign relievers Fernando Rodney and Brandon Lyon. Rodney received an $11 million, two-year contract from the Los Angeles Angels, and Lyon signed with Houston for $15 million over three years. The 30-year-old Valverde is 19-19 with a 3.17 ERA and 167 saves in seven major league seasons—five with the Diamondbacks and two with Houston. He was an All-Star in 2007, when he won the Rolaids Relief Man Award in the NL and finished sixth in Cy Young Award voting. Valverde is a Type A free agent. He turned down a salary arbitration offer from the Astros, so they would receive compensation for his departure in this year's amateur draft. ***(AP)***

AP source: Johnson, Marlins reach $39M, 4-year deal

MIAMI (AP)—The Marlins' pledge to loosen their purse strings paid off big for Josh Johnson. Florida's ace agreed Thursday to a $39 million, four-year contract, a person familiar with the negotiations said. The person spoke to The Associated Press on condition of anonymity because the Marlins hadn't announced an agreement. The deal covers Johnson's final two years of salary arbitration eligibility and pushes back his chance to become a free agent by two years. It's the sort of multiyear deal baseball's most frugal franchise has avoided in the past, and it comes only two days after an announcement that the Marlins agreed to increase payroll spending in response to complaints from the players' union. The only Marlins player with a comparable contract is star shortstop Hanley Ramirez, who signed a $70 million, six-year contract in 2008. Florida had the lowest payroll in the majors three of the past four seasons, including in 2009. The union complained the payroll has been so small as to violate baseball's revenue sharing provisions, a charge the Marlins denied. The Marlins now have Johnson under contract through 2013, and he becomes the front-runner to start the first game in their new ballpark in 2012. Widely regarded as one of baseball's best young pitchers, he made the All-Star team for the first time last year, when he had a career-best record of 15-5 with an ERA of 3.23 in 209 innings.

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EASTERN CONFERENCE

Atlantic Division

	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	27	11	.711	—
Toronto	19	20	.487	8 1/2
New York	16	22	.421	11
Philadelphia	12	26	.316	15
New Jersey	3	35	.079	24

Southeast Division

Orlando	26	13	.667	—
Atlanta	25	13	.658	1/2
Miami	19	18	.514	6
Charlotte	17	19	.472	7 1/2
Washington	12	25	.324	13

Central Division

Cleveland	30	11	.732	—
Chicago	17	20	.459	11
Milwaukee	15	21	.417	12 1/2
Indiana	13	25	.342	15 1/2
Detroit	12	25	.324	16

WESTERN CONFERENCE

Southwest Division

Dallas	25	13	.658	—
San Antonio	24	13	.649	1/2
Houston	22	17	.564	3 1/2
New Orleans	20	17	.541	4 1/2
Memphis	19	18	.514	5 1/2

Northwest Division

Denver	25	14	.641	—
Portland	24	16	.600	1 1/2
Utah	22	17	.564	3
Oklahoma City	21	17	.553	3 1/2
Minnesota	8	32	.200	17 1/2

Pacific Division

L.A. Lakers	30	9	.769	—
Phoenix	24	15	.615	6
L.A. Clippers	17	20	.459	12
Sacramento	15	22	.405	14
Golden State	11	26	.297	18

Yesterday's Games

Chicago 96, Boston 83

Utah 97, Cleveland 96

SONY OPEN SCORES

HONOLULU (AP)—Scores Thursday from the $5.5 million Sony Open at the 7,044-yard, par-70 Waialae Country Club:

FIRST ROUND

Note: Tom Gillis failed to complete first round due to darkness

Ryan Palmer	31-34—65
Zach Johnson	34-31—65
Davis Love III	32-33—65
Troy Merritt	32-33—65
Robert Allenby	34-31—65
John Merrick	32-33—65
Jeff Quinney	33-33—66
Carl Pettersson	34-32—66
Pat Perez	34-32—66
Angel Cabrera	34-32—66
Shane Bertsch	33-33—66
Tom Lehman	32-34—66
Steve Stricker	35-31—66
Brian Stuard	32-34—66
Roger Tambellini	33-33—66
Martin Flores	32-34—66
Ricky Barnes	34-33—67
Michael Allen	35-32—67
Troy Matteson	34-33—67
Chad Campbell	37-31—68
Stewart Cink	32-36—68
Sean O'Hair	34-34—68
Stephen Ames	37-31—68
Bob Estes	36-32—68
WC Liang	34-34—68
Ryuji Imada	36-32—68
Brian Gay	34-34—68
Rory Sabbatini	34-34—68
Mark Wilson	34-34—68
Ryuichi Oda	34-34—68
Kevin Johnson	35-33—68
Jason Dufner	36-33—69
Briny Baird	37-32—69
Bubba Watson	35-34—69
Chris Tidland	34-35—69
Chad Collins	34-35—69
Marc Leishman	33-36—69
Joe Ogilvie	34-35—69
Ernie Els	35-34—69
Vijay Singh	34-35—69
Retief Goosen	36-33—69
Graham DeLaet	32-37—69
Blake Adams	35-34—69
Spencer Levin	34-35—69
T.J. Kua	35-34—69
John Rollins	35-35—70
Y.E. Yang	32-38—70
Matt Kuchar	36-34—70
Justin Leonard	36-34—70
Woody Austin	34-36—70
Chris Baryla	34-36—70
Aaron Goldberg	34-36—70
Fredrik Jacobson	37-33—70
Ben Curtis	36-34—70
Chez Reavie	35-35—70
David Toms	34-36—70
Dustin Johnson	37-33—70
Omar Uresti	37-33—70
Brian Davis	36-34—70
Jeff Klauk	36-34—70
Rich Barcelo	34-36—70
Matt Bettencourt	32-39—71
Corey Pavin	36-35—71
Bryce Molder	36-35—71
Boo Weekley	35-36—71
Nathan Green	34-37—71
Richard S. Johnson	34-37—71
Jim Carter	35-36—71
Jerod Turner	34-37—71
Matt Jones	37-34—71
Chris Wilson	36-35—71
Roland Thatcher	34-37—71
Dean Wilson	36-35—71
Webb Simpson	36-35—71
Tim Clark	35-36—71
Mark Calcavecchia	36-35—71
K.J. Choi	35-36—71
Nick O'Hern	37-34—71
Daisuke Maruyama	37-34—71
Josh Teater	37-34—71
Cameron Tringale	36-35—71
Henrik Bjornstad	37-34—71
Nick Mason	38-33—71
George McNeill	39-33—72
Jeff Gove	37-35—72
Parker McLachlin	35-37—72
D.J. Trahan	34-38—72
Stuart Appleby	36-36—72
Tim Petrovic	34-38—72
Steve Wheatcroft	35-37—72
Cameron Percy	35-37—72
Tadd Fujikawa	37-35—72
Ted Purdy	36-36—72
Justin Rose	37-35—72
Paul Goydos	36-36—72
Cameron Beckman	35-37—72
Greg Kraft	38-34—72
Bo Van Pelt	35-37—72
Brenden Pappas	35-37—72
Brendon de Jonge	35-37—72
John Huston	34-39—73
Jay Williamson	38-35—73
Bill Haas	37-36—73
Charlie Wi	38-35—73
Daniel Chopra	39-34—73
Mathias Gronberg	38-35—73
Michael Letzig	36-37—73
John Daly	37-36—73
Kevin Na	35-38—73
Derek Lamely	35-38—73
David Lutterus	34-39—73
Brett Quigley	39-34—73
Johnson Wagner	35-38—73
Charles Howell III	36-37—73
Jeff Maggert	38-35—73
Jason Day	35-38—73
Scott Piercy	39-34—73
Kris Blanks	37-36—73
Chris Riley	39-35—74
Jerry Kelly	38-36—74
Alex Prugh	36-38—74
Luke Donald	39-35—74
Kevin Hayashi	38-36—74
Jesper Parnevik	41-34—75
Rich Beem	37-38—75
Brad Faxon	38-37—75
Lucas Glover	35-40—75
Jonathan Byrd	38-37—75
Rickie Fowler	40-35—75
Garth Mulroy	39-36—75
Scott McCarron	41-34—75
Shigeki Maruyama	38-37—75
Jimmy Walker	38-37—75
Jeff Overton	37-38—75
Harrison Frazar	40-36—76
Justin Bolli	39-37—76
Billy Horschel	36-40—76
Kaname Yokoo	37-39—76
D.A. Points	39-38—77
Tim Wilkinson	37-40—77
Steve Lowery	41-36—77
Marc Turnesa	40-37—77
Nicholas Thompson	42-37—79
Tom Gillis	DNF

BY THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Golfer of the Year this weekend

The Fil-Taga Golfers Association 2009 Golfer of the Year Tournament will be held this Saturday and Sunday, Jan. 16 and 17, at the Kingfisher Golf Links and Marianas Country Club, respectively.

Today's first 18 holes will be played at the Talafofo golf course with a tee off time of 11:30am following an 11am show time.

The rest of the 36 holes of the two-day tournament will then be held at the Marpi golf course tomorrow also beginning at 11:30am with show time scheduled 30 minutes earlier.

Tournament director Mike Cruz, who incidentally is the defending champion of the Golfer of the Year, said Sunday's tournament will also double as the January ace of the club.

Cruz also reminded participants to settle their 2010 membership dues prior to the holding of the January tournament, as payment is a prerequisite for entry in the competition.

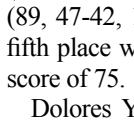
Cruz (January), Nazarino Ortiz Jr. (February), Nestor Siruelo (March), Adonis Matutino (April), Joe Miranda (May), Rodrigo Nimes (June), Nono Bostre (July), Richard Meimban (August), Mando Guban (September), Freddie Cataluna (October), Jason Gatdula (November), and Jun Calma (December) will duke it out for the Golfer of the Year.

Established in 1993, Fil-Taga's tournaments operate under a computer-controlled handicap system that creates parity among players in the A and B Flights.

A Fil-Taga Ace of the Month champion is crowned monthly. Regular tournaments are scheduled once a month, normally every third Sunday. Green fees are in the $35 to $40 price range for most tournaments.

Its 2008-2009 set of officers are led by president Mike Cruz, vice president Jhun Calma, secretary Manny Po, treasurer Arnaldo Guban, and board of directors Fr. Manny Corcuera , Jhun Dela Cruz, Ted Malaran, Gil Faller, Rey Ferraz, Greg De Torres, Rene Batalliones, Nestor Siruelo, and George Sablan. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

Clottey vows: I'll fight Pacquiao to the last



CEBU CITY, Philippines—What Manny Pacquiao wants in a fight he'll get from Joshua Clottey.

The muscular Ghanaian has vowed not to run, saying he'll bring the fight to the Filipino pound-for-pound superstar from the opening bell.

"I will follow him; I will come forward in the fight," the 33-year-old Clottey told James Slater of eastsideboxing.com on Wednesday.

Grateful for the fight opportunity given him by Pacquiao and Top Rank Promotions, Clottey said he wants to return the favor by promising a hell of a fight for the World Boxing Organization welterweight title bout on March 13 at the Cowboys Stadium in Arlington, Texas.

"I want Manny Pacquiao to know that he picked a guy who will give him all that he wants," Clottey also told Lem Satterfield of Boxing Fanhouse in another interview. "I'm going to fight until the last bell."

In his last fight, Pacquiao was left pursuing a backpedalling Miguel Cotto in the last few rounds, eventually stopping the Puerto Rican in the 12th. Cotto came into the fight at a catch weight of 145 pounds after salvaging a close decision over Clottey.

Clottey is over two inches taller than Pacquiao at nearly 5-foot-9 and is expected to tip the scales at around 160 lb on fight night. It would make him the biggest man the General Santos lefty has ever faced in the ring. (***PDI***)

MINOR

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hosting is so far her best.

In the four sets she won in the 2010 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships, Minor took 28 games and dropped only five for a 75.8 winning percentage. She is also entered in the girls' U14 doubles, pairing with New Caledonia Shirley Pydo. Minor and Pydo were set to meet Eliza Laura Benson and Smith yesterday afternoon.

Meanwhile, joining Minor in the quarterfinals in the girls U14 singles is her teammate in ITF Pacific Oceania Touring Team, Fiji's Annie Shannon. Shannon downed Georgia Smith in the first round, 6-0, 6-0, and moved to the quarterfinals after a 6-2, 6-1 triumph over the seventh-seeded Kristen Renee Mc Sweeney.

Minor and Shannon's two other teammates, Papua New Guinea's Lorish Puluspene and Tarani Kamoe were ousted in the second and first round, respectively. Kamoe was paired against No. 8 seed Michelle Pits in the first round and lost in three sets, 6-7, 6-1, 4-6. Puluspene won her first round match against fourth seed Olivia Toner, 6-1, 7-5, but bowed to Minor's quarterfinals foe, Sim, 0-6, 2-6.

UKITA

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Terry Tudela finished fourth with her 74 net (49-41, 90 gross, 16 handicap), while Kim Yang (89, 49-40, 14), Yuko Togawa (81, 40-41, 6), and Kimiko Abe (89, 47-42, 14) were all tied at fifth place with an identical net score of 75.

Dolores Yamagishi (net 76), Grace Wang (78), Im Jeon Kim (78), Noriko Togawa (79), Bennet Seman (79), Terry Attao (80), Chin Lin Wang (81), Pil Sun Kitami (82), Sherlyn Jones (85), and Lorraine Babauta (88) also took part in the January CWGA tournament.

Established in March 2007, CWGA is a nonprofit organization founded to promote, encourage, and introduce women to the sport of golf in the CNMI.

The organization intends to accomplish the following: 1. Promote civic and community interest in golf; 2. Establish and encourage competition and good sportsmanship; 3. Promote and provide social functions of the members and their families; 4. Promote youth golf activities; and 5. To do any or all things necessary and proper to accomplish its purpose and intention.

CWGA also commits its members to abide by a set of values that will further enrich a golfer's performance, attitude, and conduct-adopted form the USA Junior Golf Association.

The set of values members of CWGA are committed to faithfully are as follows: perseverance; sportsmanship; respect; honesty; judgment; responsibility; reliance; courtesy; and sincerity.

For more information about the club's monthly tournaments, call Noriko Togawa at 287-0027, Lou Kim at 483-5255, Terry Tudela at 483-1761, Lorraine Babauta at 287-0621, and Bennet Seman at 483-0126. ***(Saipan Tribune)***

SHIRLEY'S

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host Shirley's, TBK Auto Care, Pepsi-PTC, Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan, Aqua Resort Club, Public School System, Bank of Guam, Microl Corp., Mobil Oil, and Cell Pro.

League coordinator Boy Lingcaso said they are hoping to have 14 teams, which will play in a round-robin format in the regular season. The Top 2 teams will then get byes in the first round of the playoffs. The 12 remaining squads will duel in the first round of the playoffs and the six winning teams will join the two other early qualifiers in double-elimination playoffs.

Representatives of confirmed teams and those still interested in joining next month's caging are required to attend a meeting on Jan. 19 at 6:30pm at Shirley's Coffee Shop in Susupe.

Ground rules, team rosters, uniforms, and program for the opening day will be discussed at the meeting.

In the opening, Lingcaso said they will be giving away prizes for best uniform and best muse. Trophies will also be awarded to the Top 3 finishers at the end of the season, while top individual performers will also be recognized. At the end of each match, the host will choose the Shirley's Best Player of the Game.

In the inaugural Shirley's caging last year, MBI swept Advance in the best-of-three finals, winning Games 1 (74-71) and 2 (89-70). The Kitz Barja-coached MBI pulled off an upset against pennant champion G4S in the semifinals, 66-59, to nail a seat in the best-of-three title series. The X-Terminators notched the second finals berth after stunning Fiesta Resort in the other semis game, (87-80).

For more information about next year's Shirley's caging, contact Lingcaso at 233-4519 or 287-2926.

27 VIE

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in the ranking system with his 901 points. Joining Angeles in the Top 10 are Kitz Barja (1,109), Alex Castro (756), Richard Leong (719), and Lito Teodoro (717).

Other qualifiers are Alex Cacdac (630, Dannie Robles (592), Tony Verdaguer (523), Paul Pangelinan (506), Jon Eparwa (468), Efren Cacdac (299), Nick Gutierrez 9283), Jon Hensley (266), Tony Yarobwemal (223), Ariel Dumapit (157), Jeremy Williams (150), Jared Gutierrez (130), Joe Sto. Domingo (120), Russelle Zapanta (100), Chester Bai (86), Ben Ayzon (70), and Jorge Soledad (69).

Angeles, who won the same title in 2006, but failed to defend it in 2007, prevailed in the 2008 event after beating Raul Dumapit in the finals, 180-144.

The 21-year-old Angeles was ranked second in the step-ladder finals and notched an automatic semis ticket. He tallied 1,806 pinfalls in the nine-game qualifying roll-offs. Robert Talavera claimed the other outright semifinals slot when he finished on top of the 18-man field in the qualifying roll-offs with his total of 1,859 pinfalls. The other qualifiers in the step-ladder finals were the No. 4 ranked Ador Dimaano and No. 5 Omechelang.

Dimaano slipped past Omechelang in the step-ladder finals, 171-169. Dumapit was paired against Hensley in the other elimination game with the former winning in the tiebreak. Dumapit's next foe was Talavera and the former advanced to the finals with a 180-145 triumph in the semifinals. Angeles defeated Dimaano, 219-152, in the other semis pairing to make it to the finals against Dumapit.

In this Sunday's tournament, there will be a nine-game roll-off that will determine the Top 3 bowlers for the step-ladder finals. The No. 2 and 3 player after the nine-game roll-off will advance to the finals against the No. 1 finisher in the qualifier. The top finisher has a twice-to-beat advantage in the finals.

Six-way tie for early lead at Sony Open

Six players were tied for the lead after Thursday's opening day at the Sony Open–the first full-field event of the U.S. PGA Tour season.

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Saipan Tribune
Sports

Rookie's 3-pointer at buzzer lifts Jazz over Cavs

Rookie Sundiata Gaines hit a 3-pointer at the buzzer to end a frenzied series of comebacks and give the Utah Jazz a 97-96 victory over the Cleveland Cavaliers on Thursday night.

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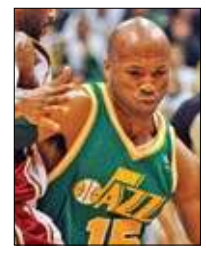

Thea Minor, seen here in training session for the Micronesian Games last month, advanced to the quarterfinals of her third tournament in Australia.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Minor undefeated in Australia

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

CNMI junior tennis player Thea Minor swept her first two games in the 2010 Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships to remain in contention for the girls U14 singles title in her third and last tournament in Australia.

Minor opened her bid in the Victorian Junior Grasscourt Championships with an impressive 6-0, 6-0 win over the fifth-seeded Caitlyn Mitchell on Thursday. In the same day, the CNMI netter played her second game and nailed another straight set victory over Hene Demiri, 6-2, 7-6, to advance to the quarterfinals.

In the Round of 8, the Hopwood Junior High School student was scheduled to take on Georgia Louise Sim yesterday morning at the Wodonga Tennis Centre in Victoria.

Minor's first two wins in the main draw of the Victorian netfest were recorded at the Albury Tennis Centre, in New South Wales, which also hosted the second tournament—2010 Post Margaret Court Cup—that the CNMI bet had competed in.

The 14-year-old netter's first tournament was the 2010 Ducats GV Championships in Shepparton in Victoria. In Shepparton and Albury, Minor dropped all her first round matches in the main draw, forcing her to play in the consolation draw. Her showing in the 30-player draw tournament that Wodonga is

See MINOR on Page 27

MBI's Art Trajano, right, tries to power his way against the umbrella defense of Advance's Rodel Apostol during their title match in the inaugural Shirley's caging last year.

ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Shirley's caging meeting Jan. 19, 3 slots remaining

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The 2010 Shirley's Coffee Shop Invitational Basketball League has only three remaining slots for interested teams as the new season of the annual caging will kick off on Feb. 7 at the JP Centre Basketball Court.

The three teams that will make the deadline will join 11 teams, which had already confirmed their participation in next month's caging. The list include defending champion Micronesian Brokers, Inc.,

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Ukita wins first CWGA tourney of 2010

CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Participants of the January tournament of the CNMI Golfers Association pose after the competition held last Saturday, Jan. 9, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

Terue Ukita started the year with a bang after topping the January tournament of the CNMI Golfers Association held last Saturday, Jan. 9, at the Laolao Bay Golf Resort.

Ukita won the year's first CWGA tournament after turning in a net score of 67, which she attained after her gross of 91 was sliced by her 24 handicap. Ukita fired a 49 in the front and a 42 in the back.

Eun Ae Chang finished second, five strokes behind Ukita with her net 72. Chang came away with the day's second lowest net score with the strength of her 90 gross (47-43) and 18 handicap.

Coming in third with a net score of 73 was Kyung A. Yang, who carded a gross of 97 (50-47) and sported a 24 handicap.

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27 vie for King of the Lanes title

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Twenty-seven male bowlers qualified for Saipan Bowling Association's season-ending 2009 King of the Lanes Tournament that will be played tomorrow at the Capital Bowling Center in Garapan.

Qualifiers for the 2009 crown were determined based on BRS (bowlers ranking system) and monthly participation. Keglers who joined at least five monthly roll-offs or made it to the Top 36 in the BRS are given slots to the season-finale event.

Raymond Zapanta leads the 2009 rankings with his 1,578 points. Completing the Top 5 are Percy Omechelang (1,436 points), Simon Manacop (1,419), Robert Talavera (1,265), and Raul Dumapit (1,262).

Last year's King of the Lanes titlist Raymond Angeles placed only seventh

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